

OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

The Letters of Psellos

Cultural Networks and Historical Realities

Edited by

MICHAEL JEFFREYS

AND MARC D. LAUXTERMANN

OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

Editorial Board

JAMES HOWARD-JOHNSTON ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

MARC LAUXTERMANN PAUL MAGDALINO

HENRY MAGUIRE CYRIL MANGO

MARLIA MANGO JEAN-PIERRE SODINI

JONATHAN SHEPARD

OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

Oxford Studies in Byzantium consists of scholarly monographs and editions on the history, literature, thought, and material culture of the Byzantine world.

Holy Sites Encircled

The Early Byzantine Concentric Churches of Jerusalem

Vered Shalev-Hurvitz

Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era

c.680–850

M. T. G. Humphreys

Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century

Dimitri Korobeinikov

Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081

Floris Bernard

The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine

An Archaeological Approach

Gideon Avni

Shaping a Muslim State

The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official

Petra M. Sijpesteijn

Niketas Choniates

A Historiographical Study

Alicia Simpson

Byzantines, Latins, and Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean World after 1150

Jonathan Harris, Catherine Holmes, Eugenia Russell

Debating the Saints' Cults in the Age of Gregory the Great

Matthew Dal Santo

The Embodied Icon

Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium

Warren T. Woodfin

'We have no king but Christ'

Christian Political Thought in Greater Syria on the Eve of the

Arab Conquest (c.400–585)

Philip Wood

Tilling the Hateful Earth

Agricultural Production and Trade in the Late Antique East

Michael Decker

The Letters of Psellos

Cultural Networks and Historical Realities

Edited by

MICHAEL JEFFREYS AND
MARC D. LAUXTERMANN

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Oxford University Press 2017

The moral rights of the authors have been asserted

First Edition published in 2017

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016937164

ISBN 978-0-19-878722-8

Printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

Preface

This volume consists of two uneven parts: a number of papers presented at a workshop dedicated to the correspondence of Michael Psellos, held in Oxford on 6–7 November 2010, and the summaries of all the letters of Michael Psellos compiled over many years of sustained research for the *Prosopography of the Byzantine World* project by Michael Jeffreys. The second part is obviously the most important one because it offers Byzantinists a shortcut into the often bewildering, and sometimes incomprehensible, letters of Michael Psellos; but it is hoped that the first part, too, may shed light on Psellos' fascinating correspondence.

In an ideal world this volume would have come out *after*, not before Stratis Papaioannou's forthcoming edition of the letters of Psellos; but as this world is far from ideal, we can only pray that this long-awaited edition will appear sooner rather than later. A negative result of our impatience in procuring this volume is that the studies and summaries refer to Psellos' letters by what hopefully will soon become the old numbering. But the concordances in Papaioannou's edition should solve this problem.

As this is the work of more than one person, readers will soon realize that there are disagreements between the various contributors. Disagreement is good: it is the lifeblood of true scholarship. In the case of Michael Psellos' letters, where even the best Hellenists occasionally raise their hands in despair, pretending to know it all would be ridiculous. To quote my co-editor: 'Few of those who have spent years reading Psellos are confident of getting him right: the writer of these summaries is not one of them'; neither am I.

If I have a concern, it is not disagreeing with my colleagues. Nor is it the precariousness of any interpretation in an author as difficult and elusive as Michael Psellos. It is that in an increasingly Greekless world fewer and fewer people are able to read this marvellous epistolographer in the original and understand why he deserves to be reckoned as one of the best stylists in the history of the Greek language. Psellos' letters are, together with the *Chronographia*, his claim to immortality. Please read them. If you can't, at least take the shortcut and read the summaries—and then, for heaven's sake, learn Greek.

Marc Lauxtermann

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	viii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	ix
<i>List of Contributors</i>	x

PART I. STUDIES IN THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MICHAEL PSELLOS

1. Introduction <i>Marc D. Lauxtermann</i>	3
2. Educational Networks in the Letters of Michael Psellos <i>Floris Bernard</i>	13
3. Michael Psellos and the Monastery <i>Michael Jeffreys</i>	42
4. Constantine, Nephew of the Patriarch Keroularios, and His Good Friend Michael Psellos <i>Michael Jeffreys</i>	59
5. The Intertwined Lives of Michael Psellos and John Mauropous <i>Marc D. Lauxtermann</i>	89
6. Venomous Praise: Some Remarks on Michael Psellos' Letters to Leon Paraspondylos <i>Diether Roderich Reinsch</i>	128

PART II. SUMMARIES OF THE LETTERS OF MICHAEL PSELLOS

Michael Jeffreys

Introduction	143
Manuscript Sigla	149
Summaries	151
Excursuses 1–17: Dating the Letters	417
<i>Part II Bibliography</i>	447
<i>Index</i>	459

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 4.1. The family of the patriarch Michael Keroularios	65
Figure 4.2. Constantine's descendants	83
Table 4.1. Events in the biography of *Constantine	62

List of Abbreviations

BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
BF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
BSI	<i>Byzantinoslavica</i>
Byz	<i>Byzantion</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CFHB	<i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
EEBS	<i>Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν</i>
G	Gautier (see Part II Bibliography)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
K	Karpozilos (see Part II Bibliography)
KD	Kurtz-Drexl (see Part II Bibliography)
M	Maltese (see Part II Bibliography)
MEG	<i>Medioevo Greco</i>
Moore	P. Moore, <i>Iter Psellianum</i> (Toronto, 2005)
ODB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i>
P	Papaioannou (see Part II Bibliography)
PBW	<i>Prosopography of the Byzantine World</i>
REB	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
RESEE	<i>Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes</i>
S	Sathas (see Part II Bibliography)
Sathas MB IV	<i>K.N. Σάθας, Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη Δ'</i> (Paris, 1874)
Sathas MB V	<i>K.N. Σάθας, Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη Ε'</i> (Paris, 1876)
SIFC	<i>Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica</i>
Sn	Snipes (see Part II Bibliography)
Sp	Spadaro (see Part II Bibliography)
TM	<i>Travaux et Mémoires</i>
VV	<i>Vizantijskij Vremennik</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
ZRVI	<i>Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i>

List of Contributors

Floris Bernard, Assistant Professor, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest.

Michael Jeffreys, Professor Emeritus of Modern Greek, University of Sydney.

Marc D. Lauxtermann, Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature, Exeter College, University of Oxford.

Diether Roderich Reinsch, Professor Emeritus of Byzantine Studies, Freie Universität Berlin.

Part I

Studies in the Correspondence
of Michael Psellos

1

Introduction

Marc D. Lauxtermann

Psellos was born in 1018 and died in 1078. From the decade of the 1040s until his death he was a public figure, a widely read writer on a vast array of subjects, with a role in government. Some modern commentators make his political role consistently dominant, an impression Psellos himself cultivates in the *Chronographia*, his major historical work. Other commentators (who will find some support in this book) claim that the extent of his power varied and was sometimes minimal. Both in outline and in detail his biography is contested in multiple ways. Nearly all the multifarious scraps of information available come from his own writings, but they are usually undated, frequently allusive, and often irreconcilable.¹ Readers may be directed to the recent book by Stratis Papaioannou for an up-to-date summary of work on Psellos, with excellent bibliography; but they should be warned that although it offers splendid analyses in the literary and philosophical spheres, it is not meant to provide a systematic biography of Psellos.² We will see in what follows some of the reasons why writing such a biography is so problematic.

Psellos' baptismal name was Constantine; his monk's name, which he acquired in a curious monastic intermezzo on Mount Olympos, Michael. Mount Olympos is the one in Bithynia, across the Sea of Marmara—not the homonymous seat of the Olympian gods in Thessaly. Psellos was tonsured there in the monastery of Horaia Pege in late 1054 and, as a witty little poem tells us, left the place within less than a year:

ᾠ δέσποτα Ζεῦ καὶ πάτερ καὶ βακλέα,
ὄβριμβουγάϊε καὶ βαρυβρέμων,
Ὀλυμπον οὐκ ἤνεγκας, οὐδὲ κἂν χρόνον·
οὐ γὰρ παρήσαν αἱ θεαί σου, Ζεῦ πάτερ.

¹ See M. Jeffreys, 'Psellos and "His Emperors": Fact, Fiction and Genre', in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Farnham, 2010), 73–91.

² S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013).

‘Oh lord Zeus, oh father Zeus, rod-bearer, bull-shaped braggart and loud-thunderer, thou couldst not bear Olympus, not even for a year, because, father Zeus, thy goddesses were not there’.³

The author of this witty lampoon is a certain Sabbaites, a monk whom Psellos in letter S 35 accuses of slandering not only himself and his son-in-law, but also the metropolitan of Amaseia (the recipient): the scoundrel even had the temerity to abuse the emperor and, worst of all, insult God. Likewise, in Psellos’ equally abusive reply to the lampoon, poem no. 21, we read that Sabbaites was in the habit of vehemently criticizing all and sundry, including the emperor and the patriarch. It is clear from the description that the maligned emperor and patriarch were Isaac I Komnenos (who abdicated in November 1059) and Constantine III Leichoudes (who assumed the patriarchate in February 1059), respectively:⁴ so both the poem and the letter date from between February and November 1059, and it is reasonable to assume that Sabbaites’ lampoon which triggered the angry reaction, dates from the same period in Psellos’ life.

Most commentators (but not Floris Bernard) skip the first two lines and focus on the last two, with its witty equation of the Bithynian Olympos with the seat of the gods and of Psellos with Zeus, always lusting after his paramours. The emphasis is usually on the incompatibility of Hellenic philosophy and Christian asceticism: had Psellos only been sent off to that other Olympos, then things would have turned out quite differently!⁵ Some have suggested that the goddesses are Empress Theodora and her dead sister Zoe; but there is little to substantiate this,⁶ and Psellos does not seem to have been on good terms with Empress Theodora after his escape from the monastery.⁷ The first two lines make use of mock Homeric gibberish to underline the Zeus-like qualities of Michael Psellos, but also a vulgar *hapax legomenon*: βακλέας, which clearly derives from βάκλον (Latin ‘baculum’), ‘stick’, ‘rod’—and though, apparently, a dirty mind is a joy forever, one does not need to have one to grasp the sexual connotation.⁸

³ For the text, see L. G. Westerink (ed.), *Michael Psellus: Poemata* (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1992), 259 and 270: nos. 22 (the first two lines) and 21 (the last two lines). For a good discussion of the lampoon and Psellos’ reply to it, see F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081* (Oxford, 2014), 280–90, who points out that the use of the rare word βαρυβρέμων in Psellos 21.106 is a direct response to line 2 of the lampoon where we find the same word.

⁴ See E. de Vries-Van Der Velden, ‘Psellos et son gendre’, *BF* 23 (1996), 109–49, at 118–20.

⁵ See, for example, A. Kaldellis, *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters: the Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos* (Notre Dame, Indiana 2006), 6.

⁶ See J. N. Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 2004), 153–4, n. 96.

⁷ For the strained relations with empress Theodora, see Michael Jeffreys in this volume, *Summaries*, excursus 12.

⁸ I suspect that Sabbaites was inspired by a line from Antimachus (Fr. 67 West), oft quoted in the lexicographical tradition of the Byzantines: (...) Καβάρους θῆκεν ἀβακλέας ὀργειώνας, ‘he

Sexual slurs are obviously very common in Byzantine invectives, and thus there would seem to be no reason to pay attention to Sabbaites' description of Psellos as an oversexed satyr, were it not for a curious letter, KD 198, that appears to date from the same period as the lampoon because it refers to Psellos' dignity as *proedros* of the senate (a title he acquired under Isaac Komnenos) and tells us that the great philosopher, on his perambulations through Constantinople, is forced to wear a monk's frock.⁹ Let me quote Michael Jeffreys' excellent summary of the beginning of KD 198:

He told a lay friend he was not completely free of the leopard. The leopard was still running wild, not in foreign Assyria, but in Psellos' usual haunts—the Academy and the Stoa (so to say), the palace, worse still his home, even his bed, cutting off all escape, roaring alarmingly and changing shape. If he had submitted to it, so as to tame it, it was ferocious enough to savage him in the middle of the city. Any sudden movement, even a conciliatory one, would have made things worse. It was making him a monk, having escaped from its keepers, but God via his correspondent brought him to safety, or he would have been totally exposed, not to its claws, but its slanders and dangerous innuendos.

What on earth is Psellos on about? Stratis Papaioannou, the future editor of the letters, assumes in his monograph that Psellos kept a leopard as a pet,¹⁰ which, given the ferocious nature of this feline, hardly seems likely; even if it was a cheetah (*πάρδαλις* can mean both), a more tractable animal that can be trained for hunting, it would still not be advisable to let it roam free.¹¹ In my co-editor's view, the letter should be read against the background of 'the persecution Psellos suffered as he left the monastery';¹² but though there certainly is a touch of paranoia, I am not entirely convinced that the letter refers to widespread persecution rather than a one-person campaign of harassment.

Further on in the letter (225.21–226.10), the leopard miraculously morphs into another animal: now the creature pursuing Psellos right into his bed, is likened to a female snake, sloughing its skin and creeping inside 'with naked and tender flesh' and 'attacking him in his buttocks and groin'. This snake has a male companion (a serpent named *παρείας*) who feels no jealousy at all, but permits her to engage in bacchic frenzies.¹³ In the final paragraph (at 226.19)

put the Kabarnoi (priests of Demeter) as wagon-driving orgiasts': in combination with the sexually loaded reference to 'orgiasts', the *hapax legomenon* *ἀβακλεύς* (from another *hapax* *ἀβακλή*, 'wagon') may easily have been misunderstood.

⁹ KD 198: 225.11 (*proedros*); 224.12 (monastic habit).

¹⁰ See Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, 8.

¹¹ See N. Nicholas, 'A Conundrum of Cats: Pards and their Relatives in Byzantium', *GRBS* 40 (1999), 253–98.

¹² See the *Summaries*, at KD 198.

¹³ The reference to Dionysiac rites and bacchic frenzy in connection with the *παρείας* (incorrectly spelled *Παρίας* in the edition of Kurtz-Drexel) in 226.4–7 ultimately derives from Demosthenes, *De corona*, §260. Psellos discusses the same snake in letter K 2 (ed. A. Karpozilos,

Psellos explicitly calls her pursuit an ‘erotic game’, and in the middle part of the letter (at 225.13–17) he compares himself to the beautiful Joseph, tempted to sin by the adulterous wife of Potiphar. Psellos is being sexually beleaguered. What are we to make of this? As Stratis Papaioannou has brilliantly shown in his monograph, Psellos loves to play with the concept of rhetorical gender, sometimes emphasizing his more ‘feminine’ side, sometimes declaring a huge interest in ‘female’ affairs, and sometimes engaging in a daring erotic discourse presenting himself as the object of desire.¹⁴ I do not think this is the case here. The erotic metaphors are too explicit, and the sexual innuendos too blunt and unsophisticated, to be brushed aside as another of Psellos’ forays into the minefield of rhetorical gender. Although he calls his own letter a *παιδιά λογική*, ‘an intellectual game’, and tells its recipient that it is meant to make him laugh (226.25–9), there is little reason to doubt that the *έρωτική παιδιά*, the ‘erotic game’, to which he had been subjected and which he saw as harassment, was far from amusing to Psellos.

In short, I suspect that one of the ‘goddesses’ mentioned by Sabbaites in his lampoon is the leopard/snake forcing her unwelcome attentions on Psellos in letter KD 198. And whereas Sabbaites portrays him as a latter-day Zeus, in the letter Psellos assumes the role of Dionysus, riding his leopard and surrounded by maenads who reach bacchic frenzy point while holding a snake (the infamous *παρείας*) above their heads.

Where I find traces of erotic mischief, Michael Jeffreys senses an atmosphere of persecution and Stratis Papaioannou discovers an exotic pet. The letter consists of roughly 850 words, written in fairly artificial, but not incomprehensible Greek, decked with a number of literary allusions (not all of them spotted by the editors),¹⁵ brimming with stylistic creativity and narrative gusto, and very enjoyable to read. But although the text is relatively short, there are at least three different interpretations, and probably many more, for this letter alone. The same holds true for the other 515 letters, which, insofar as they have attracted attention, have generated a vast array of speculations and interpretations. Every reader creates his own Psellos.

There are broadly speaking three reasons why it is so difficult to pin the letters down to a single message. The first is the most obvious: the combination of historical distance and epistolographical intimacy—the fact that Psellos and his correspondents share inside knowledge and therefore take background information for granted, while we are unable to follow the colloquy on paper because we are not in the know and have an outsider’s

¹⁴ *Δύο ανέκδοτες επιστολές του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού*, *Δωδώνη* 9 (1980), 299–310, at 307: read *εὐιάζον* (not *ἐβιάζον*) *τὴν διονυσιακὴν ἐκείνην φωνήν* in lines 10–11).

¹⁴ See Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, 192–231.

¹⁵ For instance, the leopard ‘on the road to Assyria’ (223.23) comes from *Hosea* 13.7 (in the Septuagint version).

perspective. Reading Psellos' letters is like walking in on a conversation halfway through.

The second problem is that the generic conventions of Byzantine epistolography demand a certain degree of abstraction and literary finesse: 'The letter was [...] expected to be highly polished and much worked-over, not yielding its secrets to a superficial reading. The recipient was ready to spend some time on it, decoding and appreciating it for all its virtues, discussing it with his friends'.¹⁶ It is precisely because of these arcane literary codes that the Byzantine letter has had a bad press in the past and is still generally overlooked by historians, who tend to view the genre as a vacuous, trivial pursuit, verbose and of little significance other than to keep the philologists occupied. In fact, many of Psellos' letters may be regarded as documents: they do not have standard documentary forms, but they form part of real negotiations, as is assumed throughout this volume. Despite their obvious 'literariness', they have an immediate bearing on the lives of the persons and communities involved. Stratis Papaioannou, after intensive investigations, has found no evidence of an authorial edition of any letters¹⁷ that could have been designed to impose on them motivations different from those of their original moment of composition. This means that there has been no editorial tampering, at least not by Psellos, with the texts of his letters which read like originals.

The third reason why Psellos' letters allow for multiple interpretations is his much-vaunted irony.¹⁸ In Chapter 6, Diether Roderich Reinsch discusses the use of irony in a number of letters to Leo Paraspondylos as well as his portrayal in Psellos' *Chronographia*, rightly pointing out that, in the case of Psellos, one must always reckon with the possibility that he is not telling the whole truth, but is playing a literary game with the reader. The joke is really on those who take him at face value, ignoring all the signs that, as Reinsch puts it, shout out loud: 'Watch out! Irony!' The search for irony is complicated by Psellos' insertion of unmarked quotations from others, particularly lines from letters previously exchanged with his current correspondents.

It is worth noting that Psellian irony has not only proved a stumbling block for modern scholars. Already in his own time it led to misunderstandings and accusations of dishonesty. In letter KD 229, for example, he reminds his good friend John Mauropous that, rather than taking him too literally, he should

¹⁶ M. Mullett, 'The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter', in M. Mullett and R. Scott (eds), *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition* (Birmingham, 1981), 75–93, at 78; repr. in eadem, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2007), no. II.

¹⁷ See E. N. Papaioannou, 'Fragile Literature: Byzantine Letter Collections and the Case of Michael Psellos', in P. Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine: le texte en tant que message immédiat* (Paris, 2012), 289–328.

¹⁸ See, for example, J. N. Ljubarskij, 'Byzantine Irony: The Case of Michael Psellos', in A. Avramea, A. Laiou, and E. Chrysos (eds), *Βυζάντιο: κράτος και κοινωνία* (Athens, 2003), 349–60.

read between the lines and interpret his letters in the spirit in which they were intended. It is clear from the context that Mauropous felt let down by Psellos at a time of crisis and had accused him of betraying their friendship. Not at all, says Psellos: like Mauropous, he too had to ‘adapt himself’ to the changed circumstances (272.13–14). The term used here is *συμμεταβέβλημαι*, which is related to a key term in Psellos’ vocabulary: *μεταβολή*, ‘variation, change, adaptation’. Whereas, in other writers, it denotes the skill of rhetorical variation, for Psellos it is more than just a literary guidance on how to write a poem, an essay, or a letter. In his view, it is a moral imperative for true philosophers to be flexible and versatile if they wish to better the societies they live in: moral firmness is admirable outside the domain of politics, but if one truly engages with this world, one has to adapt oneself constantly to changing circumstances, all the while sticking to one’s inner principles but without always appearing to do so.¹⁹ Psellos has often been accused of hypocrisy by posterity: his reply to the critics would probably have been that they fail to understand the virtue of adaptability and to acknowledge his lonely mission as a philosopher in unphilosophical times.

In the same letter, having stated that he adapts himself to changing circumstances, he frankly admits that ‘in my previous letters (to Mauropous) I have been feigning quite a lot (*οὐκ ὀλίγα... εἰρωνευσάμενος*), just as I often provoke my friends to a more genuine disposition (towards me) by pretending’ (272.14–16). Mauropous’ angry reaction seems to have surprised Psellos, or was that irony as well? But one does not have to be a Mauropodian to understand that all the feigning, dissembling, and pretending Psellos readily admits to was not exactly the basis for a solid friendship. And yet, despite all appearances, these two intellectuals continued to correspond down the years, from the 1030s when Psellos studied with Mauropous, until 1078, the year in which Psellos died.

Since Mauropous has left behind a collection of letters, some of which are addressed to Psellos, we are in the unique position of having access to both sides of the correspondence. We do not have the replies from any of Psellos’ other correspondents: his letters are mostly a one-way conversation. Even in the case of Mauropous, however, it is rare to find a direct exchange of letters: as I argue in Chapter 5, Psellos M 12 (=G 33) is a reply to Mauropous’ letter 23, and the same goes for Psellos S 203, appropriately called an *ἀντίγραμμα* (reply) to the preceding one, S 202, a letter from Mauropous that, curiously, ended up among the letters of Psellos. What we are left with are the fragments of a substantial correspondence that spanned more than forty years. There are so many gaps in our knowledge, and the bits and pieces of information that we do

¹⁹ For the concept of *μεταβολή* in Psellos, see Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, 88–127.

have are often so contradictory, that it is clearly impossible to reconstruct the various stages of their tumultuous friendship without a fair amount of imagination.

There is obviously nothing wrong with historical imagination as long as it is grounded in solid scholarship: without it, historians might as well shut up shop.²⁰ In Chapter 4, Michael Jeffreys reconstructs the biography of Constantine, nephew of the patriarch Keroularios, an important member of the ruling class from the 1050s through to the late 1070s. Constantine hardly ever appears in Byzantine narrative sources, but he is well attested on lead seals, which allow us to follow his *cursus honorum* but do not give precise dates. The letters of Psellos to Constantine provide a possibility of putting flesh on the skeleton of his career and relating the changes in the titles and forms of address to major moments in the political history of mid- to late eleventh-century Byzantium. The aim of my co-editor's chapter, in his own words, is 'to set parameters for discussing the changing dynamics of Byzantine political society and their impact on government'. Michael Jeffreys' reconstruction of the course of events differs significantly from that of Wassiliou-Seibt.²¹ Readers may decide for themselves which of these two reconstructions seems more plausible, but what I wish to stress here is the fact that the letters of Psellos easily lend themselves to alternative narratives and competing interpretations.

The other two contributions to this volume, by Floris Bernard and, once again, Michael Jeffreys, focus not on individual correspondents, but, more broadly, on Psellos' social network and the ways in which he used it to further his personal interests. Networking in Byzantium finds its moral justification in the concept of *φιλία*, 'friendship', the social and cultural ties that bind the ruling class together and keep others out.²² The concept of *φιλία* also establishes codes of civilized behaviour, not only in real life, but also on paper—and this is why Byzantine letters often seem both formal and formulaic. To quote the eminently quotable Margaret Mullett, 'Ceremonial was involved in the intricate exchange of compliments, abstract forms of address and superlatives which reflected precisely the relationship of status and intimacy between correspondents'.²³

²⁰ See E. de Vries-Van der Velden, 'The Letters of Michael Psellos, Historical Knowledge and the Writing of History', in W. Hörandner and M. Grünbart (eds), *L'épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique* (Paris, 2003), 121–35.

²¹ See A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Die Neffen des Patriarchen Michael I. Kerullarios (1043–1058) und ihre Siegel: Ikonographie als Ausdrucksmittel der Verwandtschaft', *Bulgaria Mediaevalis* 2 (2012), 107–19.

²² See E. Limousin, 'Les lettrés en société: «φίλος βίος» ou «πολιτικός βίος»?', *Byz* 69 (1999), 344–65.

²³ Mullett, 'The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter', 78.

In Chapter 2, Floris Bernard discusses Psellos' letters to teachers, fellow students, and former pupils and shows how he 'used educational networks as efficient channels for mutual services'. It becomes clear from his analysis that Psellos advocated an ideal of intellectual *φιλία* which, like other forms of social exclusion, served the interests of a small group of higher civil servants, either employed in the provinces as *kritai* or in the imperial administration. And it is also clear that, as the arch-intellectual, Psellos played a leading role in this educational network, establishing and maintaining contacts with fellow intellectuals over long periods of time. One of the main themes in his letters is mutual assistance: he repeatedly asks for favours, either for himself or others, in return for services rendered to his correspondents when they were studying with him. Michael Jeffreys' study of the letters that deal with monasteries and the monastic life, in Chapter 3, illustrates this very well because many of the requests Psellos makes to his former students, especially if they are serving in the provinces, relate either to the financial management of the monasteries of which he was in charge as *charistikarios*, or to possible acquisitions of new ones. It is manifestly clear from the letters that it is the system of *charistike* that keeps the great philosopher financially afloat.

It is also clear that, however much Psellos may have hated his stay on Mount Olympos, monasticism retained a strong pull: he keeps returning to the subject in his letters, to the point where it becomes obsessive and even slightly perverse. In letters KD 59, KD 141, and KD 30, for instance, he tells the great general Katakalon Kekaumenos who had become a monk and had asked for the arrears of his pay as *kouropalates*, that he should be grateful that the emperor of this world had withheld his salary because it would be repaid many times over in the next. Irony is never far away in his 'monastic' letters. The problem is, however, that irony masks and unmasks at the same time. It is like a double bluff: making fun of monasticism by saying that it is so wonderful may conceal the fact that the speaker deep down really does think it is wonderful. In his analysis of the 'monastic' corpus, Michael Jeffreys discusses three letters (S 1, S 83, S 84) that deal with the wedding of Constantine, the nephew of Keroularios, in c.1073. In these letters we read that Psellos as a philosopher and a monk was initially reluctant to attend the wedding ceremony, but once persuaded to take part in it, thoroughly enjoyed it because it was such a philosophical event. He is eager to show his competence in wedding customs, but also eager to keep his distance from worldly frivolities as a philosopher/monk (*φιλόσοφος* can mean both). What are we to make of this? Does he or does he not like to listen to bawdy songs, get pelted with apples and roses, and attend the wedding banquet? Watch out! Irony works both ways!

The ambiguities of Psellos' prose should not stop historians from using it to their advantage. As Michael Jeffreys' *Summaries* show (see Part II), Psellos' letters are a truly marvellous source of information on political events, the

court, civil administration, the provinces, monasteries, the *charistike* system, dignities and offices, prosopography in general, the educational system, social codes, religious beliefs, customs, popular culture, and so on and so forth. The only excuse for why the letters of Psellos have not yet been fully exploited (except by our colleagues across the channel: Gautier, Lemerle, Cheynet), is that the Greek is difficult, and sometimes incomprehensible. The *Summaries* constitute a quantum leap in our understanding of Psellos' letters: suddenly what seemed abstruse and impenetrable is within reach of us all, ready to be used without further discussion, where appropriate, or amended where summaries have proved unequal to Psellos' intricacies.

Use the *Summaries*, but use them wisely. Their primary purpose is as a guide preceding serious research for those who find Psellos difficult (and how many will place themselves outside this category?). They will help readers select the letters from among the 516 that they need to study in full and in the original Greek. The *Summaries* are far from being the last word on the letters to which they correspond, as indeed are the *Studies* in this volume (Part I). As I have argued throughout this introduction, Psellos' prose is deliberately ambiguous, tongue-in-cheek, and ironic; there is always a hidden twist somewhere, serving as stimulus for any number of interpretations. Whatever interpretation one favours, one has to recognize this fluidity of meaning. Psellos loves to confuse his readers.

All the contributions to this volume contain one or more letters in translation at the end. They give full, explicit support to the articles to which they are appended. But another reason why my co-editor and I insisted on having these translations is that they at least convey an inkling of the sublime beauty of Psellos' letters. Psellos is a master of the art of epistolography. The Byzantines loved reading their Psellos, and they were right. His letters are immensely enjoyable. That is why so many have survived: 516 in total, scattered over various collections.²⁴ It also explains why the anonymous mid-thirteenth-century author of the treatise 'On the Four Parts of Perfect Speech' recommends Psellos (together with Gregory of Nazianzos, Libanios, Synesios, and other late antique authors) as the ultimate model for letter writing: as he explains, "These days if you want to be successful, you have to combine rhetoric and philosophy in your writings: if your only aim is to be an accomplished rhetor, they will dub you a second-rate author; on the other hand, if you are a bit too philosophical, your writings will appear dry and out of touch with modernity. So you are advised to do both. For examples of authors combining both virtues, see [...] *the essays and letters of Psellos*."²⁵

²⁴ Papaioannou, 'Fragile Literature'.

²⁵ See W. Hörandner, 'Pseudo-Gregorios Korinthios, *Über die vier Teile der perfekten Rede*', *MEG* 12 (2012), 87–131, at 105–6: for Psellos as a model for letter-writing, see lines 121–2; for Psellos as a prime example of combining rhetoric and philosophy, see lines 95–100.

One can accuse Psellos of many things, but not of being dry and out of touch with real life—still less of being a second-rate author. He never bores his readers, he never disappoints. While his *Chronographia* is widely recognized as a literary masterpiece, the essays and letters mentioned by our thirteenth-century colleague have yet to receive the modern readership they so richly deserve. It is time to change this.

Educational Networks in the Letters of Michael Psellos

Floris Bernard

In her book ‘The School of Libanios in Late Antique Antioch’, Raffaella Cribiore shows how Libanios organizes his school by means of his letters.*¹ He attracts pupils from the entire empire, providing them with the necessary knowledge and connections to make a brilliant career; he keeps the families of his pupils informed of their progress; he advertises his own learning, and sometimes gets into a tussle with rival teachers—all this through letters. The medium of the letter brings with it some additional advantages: polished, elegant, and erudite, Libanios’ letters are evidence of his rhetorical excellence and confirm his reputation as a competent teacher.

I will attempt here to demonstrate, much more concisely, that a similar connection between teaching, social networks, and letter writing can be observed in the case of Michael Psellos. Of course, in eleventh-century Byzantium, the social and cultural contexts are markedly different. However, we can observe a similar veneration of *paideia*, a similar connection between education and a career in the civil administration, and a similarly low degree of organization of education, which gives rise to rivalry between teachers and which forces them to defend or enhance their personal reputation.

Psellos’ were not the only Byzantine letters to be concerned with education. Many Byzantine authors kept in touch with former pupils or teachers by means of letters; the tenth-century so-called Anonymous Professor is an eminent example.² With their letters, these authors exhort pupils to stay with them,

* I thank Michael Jeffreys for providing me with guidance in prosopographical matters, and for allowing me to read and use his summaries before publication. This study greatly benefited from the valuable comments by members of the audience at the Oxford Workshop. I also thank Kristoffel Demoen for critically reading and revising my translations of Psellos’ letters.

¹ R. Cribiore, *The School of Libanios in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton, 2007).

² *Anonymi Professoris Epistulae*, ed. A. Markopoulos (Berlin, 2000).

defend themselves against rival teachers, recommend pupils to influential persons, and congratulate them when they obtain prominent positions.³

First, I want briefly to introduce some general problems regarding education in eleventh-century Byzantium and Psellos' teaching in particular, about which some confusion and debate remain.⁴ During this period, organized education principally took the form of a relatively independent school, connected to a monastery, or a teacher operating by himself. Patriarchal or imperial intervention, regarding hierarchy among teachers or remuneration, was not of a systemic nature.⁵ Teachers ran their own business, depending on their pupils for fees. Their success as teachers was based on personal reputation. It should be noted, however, that texts often speak of 'votes' that are cast, or 'laws' that regulate the accession of someone to a 'throne of teacher'.⁶ It is in each of these instances highly unclear from whom these votes come, and whether this reflects a kind of guild organization among teachers, or a more informal hierarchy.

Psellos' precise teaching position has also been a matter of debate.⁷ The traditional view is that Constantine IX Monomachos founded a 'university' and provided for Psellos, as 'consul of philosophers', a professorial chair of philosophy equal to Xiphilinos' chair of law. This view has now been sufficiently refuted by Günther Weiss,⁸ Paul Lemerle,⁹ and in this volume by Marc Lauxtermann. Psellos was first and foremost an independent teacher. Perhaps

³ M. Grünbart, 'Paideia Connects: The Interaction Between Teachers and Pupils in Twelfth-Century Byzantium', in S. Steckel, N. Gaul, and M. Grünbart (eds), *Networks of Learning: Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West, C. 1000–1200* (Zürich, 2014), 17–31; E. Limousin, 'Les lettrés en société : «φίλος βίος» ou «πολιτικός βίος»?', *Byz* 69 (1999), 344–65, at 353, for Nikephoros Ouranos.

⁴ An overview of the debate can be found in V. Katsaros, 'Προδρομικοί θεσμοί για την οργάνωση της ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης της εποχής των Κομνηνών από την προκομνηνεία περίοδο', in V. Vlysidou (ed.), *Η αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση (;) Το Βυζάντιο τον 11ο αιώνα (1025–1081)* (Athens, 2003), 443–71. See also F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry (1025–1081)* (Oxford, 2014), 210–12.

⁵ This is also acknowledged in A. Markopoulos, 'Education', in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, 2008), 785–95, esp. 786–7.

⁶ See Psellos' *Monody for Niketas the Maistor of the School of St Peter*, §5.1–3, for Niketas' (failed) promotion from *ὑπογραμματεὺς* to a kind of presidency (*προκαθησθαι*): I. Polemis (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Orationes Funebres, vol. I* (Berlin, 2014), 173. See also Psellos' *Encomium for John Xiphilinos*, §10 (*ibid.*, 127–9), a passage that presents many problems, but that clearly hints at a certain hierarchy among teachers. The bibliography on the matter is inconclusive; see W. Wolska-Conus, 'Les écoles de Psellos et de Xiphilin sous Constantin IX Monomaque', *TM* 6 (1976), 223–43; J.-C. Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes de la vie de Michel Psellos', *REB* 68 (2010), 5–60, at 37–47; P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 195–248.

⁷ See most recently S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge; New York, 2013), 6–7. The most thorough study of Psellos' teaching activities remains Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 195–248.

⁸ G. Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973), 65–76.

⁹ Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 243: 'Rien n'autorise à penser qu'une école supérieure, d'État, du niveau que nous dirions 'universitaire', ait alors existé'.

Psellos was protected by the emperor (and then only for a very short period of time), he was given a honorific title that gave his teaching some precedence, and he was asked for advice or for personal teaching for the imperial family, but Psellos' teaching was mainly conducted on a fairly informal, independent basis. Moreover, Psellos was not only a teacher of philosophy (certainly not in the sense in which we now understand 'philosophy'). He taught everything, from orthography through biology to theology. His numerous writings in these various disciplines, many of which are still extant, testify to this, as do some of the letters I will discuss here.

Finally, I believe that we still do not sufficiently appreciate the importance of teaching for Psellos' career and intellectual profile as a whole. Some of his letters attest to this. In S 198, addressed to Psephas, he laments the neglect he currently suffers from the powerful. He has to be satisfied with a trifling function (a teaching position in an inconsiderable school?), and contrasts this with his glorious reputation as a teacher:¹⁰

I, who have adorned Constantinople with *logoi*, who have sent the reputation of my education to the borders of the oecumene, without ignoring any part of schooling, using only my natural capacity as teacher for every kind of instruction; I, who alone have—it must be said, let the slanderers be aggrieved—investigated the different fields of knowledge, [here Psellos gives some examples of his teaching in exegesis, in law, etc.], who carry, as the only one of all, the title of teacher!

Similar statements can be found in the *Chronographia*. There, Psellos avers that he has transmitted knowledge by making it more understandable, and by dividing it into well-defined parts, and that he has gone to utmost lengths to teach it, out of a disinterested motivation to share knowledge.¹¹ These statements are admittedly self-aggrandizing boasts. But even when we take this into account, it is clear that Psellos aims to represent himself first and foremost as a teacher, that is, as a mediator of knowledge, channelling it in convenient summaries (some of which were also, as we will see, letters).

Taking into account this more complex and fragmented view of eleventh-century education, I will offer an overview of letters that give us insight into the interweaving of education and networking, leading to an understanding of education as a service which pays back in terms of social capital. Generally, the question underlying this study is the following: how do letters reflect, or

¹⁰ S 198 (491.26–492.8): οἱ τὴν Πόλιν τοῖς λόγοις κοσμήσαντες, οἱ τὴν τῆς παιδείσεως φήμην τοῖς τῆς οἰκουμένης πέρασι παραπέμψαντες, οἱ μὴ δ' ὄτι οὖν εἶδος παραλελοιπότες ἀσκήσεως, οἱ τῇ φύσει μόνη διδασκάλῳ πρὸς πᾶσαν χρῆσάμενοι μάθησιν, οἱ τὰ γένη τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν μόνου τῶν πάντων (λεγέσθω γὰρ καὶ τιτρωσκέσθωσαν οἱ βασκαίνοντες) ἀκριβῶσαντες, [...] οἱ διδάσκαλοι μόνου τῶν πάντων ἐπιγραφόμενοι. For the letter, see also E. de Vries-van der Velden, 'Les amitiés dangereuses : Psellos et Léon Paraspondylos', *BSI* 60 (1999), 315–50, at 344–5 (with French translation).

¹¹ Michele Psello, *Imperatori di Bisanzio (Cronografia)*, ed. S. Impellizzeri (Milan, 2005⁵), book VIa, §43.

establish, or maintain, various relationships that are grounded in education, be it as a pupil, a fellow student, or a teacher? Some scholars have already drawn attention to the relationship between teaching and networking in Psellos' letters, albeit without the intention of treating the matter exhaustively. Eric Limousin, in a study that analyses the use of the words *politikos* and *philia* in Psellos' period, has observed that Psellos' teaching was an important leverage for his network, and that letters to his former fellow students emphasize the ideal of intellectual *φιλία*, often making use of a vocabulary of kinship.¹² Ljubarskij, too, has remarked that many members of the intellectual circles around Psellos were once his pupils.¹³ It is my intention to further elaborate on these observations, emphasizing the particular dynamics and mental frameworks underlying these 'educational networks'.

PSELLOS AND HIS TEACHERS

Some letters dealing with Psellos' own education foreshadow elements that will return when we encounter Psellos as a teacher. A revealing letter is KD 12, a letter that, curiously enough, has not received attention as a source for information about Psellos' own studies. The recipient is not named. The first part of the letter recounts how he and Psellos became acquainted. Psellos had heard of the excellent qualities of the teacher, whose reputation extended over the whole city, and therefore he longed to become acquainted with him (what Psellos describes as *οικείωσις*). One day when the teacher was on his way to the school (which seems to have been attached to the Church of the Anargyroi), Psellos met him, talked with him, and from that day studied with him (the phrases *φοιτῶ* and *παιδείας τυγχάνω* are quite unequivocal). It is also said that Psellos 'became one of his dancers': the group of pupils is likened to the chorus of an Attic theatre, with a teacher as the chorus-leader. Psellos declares that he, like the other pupils, will praise the teacher on every occasion. Finally, he also sends him some small gifts, hoping to call him his friend rather than an acquaintance.

The story of the accidental meeting on the road shows how informal the ways were in which teachers and pupils came into contact with each other. It was a matter of personal acquaintance. Reputation (*φήμη*) was the decisive factor which enabled this teacher to recruit his students. And the teacher-student relationship is from the outset difficult to distinguish from any other

¹² E. Limousin, 'Lettres en société', 361–2.

¹³ J. Ljubarskij, *Michail Psell: Ličnost' i tvorčestvo* (Moscow, 1978), translated by A. Tzelesi, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 2004), 97–186. I cite here from the Greek edition. Education is absent in F. Tinnefeld, 'Freundschaft in den Briefen des Michael Psellos: Theorie und Wirklichkeit', *JÖB* 22 (1973), 151–68.

friendly relationship, since this letter also reads as an invitation to friendship, complete with the sending of gifts.

The community of pupils and their teacher appears in this letter as a kind of clique, a group in which mutual support plays a great role. Psellos, just like his co-pupils, sings his teacher's praises loudly, thus boosting the teacher's reputation. Some of the poems of Psellos' contemporary Christopher Mitylenaios seem to fulfil the same function: they extol the school and teachers that the poet supports, and deride teachers from rival schools.¹⁴ These public performances reinforce the bonds of allegiance within the group made up of teacher and pupils in the highly competitive atmosphere of Constantinopolitan school life. The imagery of a 'chorus' is commonly used to describe the teacher (the 'chorus-leader') with his group of pupils; we will encounter it in other letters too. It is not unreasonable to assume that Psellos was still a young student at this moment (the awkward style may also point to this), and many elements, among which the respectful salutation *δέσποτα*, indicate that Psellos was in a socially inferior position to his addressee.

The following letters (both in the editions and the manuscript), KD 13 through 15, are also addressed to a teacher of Psellos.¹⁵ Lauxtermann assumes that Psellos is in his early adulthood at this point, and is attending literary gatherings headed by Mauropous. KD 13 is a particularly curious letter. Psellos intended to rush towards his teacher, to follow his lessons and enjoy his 'sweet and beloved rhetoric'.¹⁶ But an evil daemon persuaded him to play truant. The rest of the letter is the story of a disastrous sea trip from which Psellos returned sick. The letter ends with a plea to his teacher to visit him. The following letters continue this story: in letter 14, the ailing Psellos gently reproaches his friend for not having visited him; in letter 15, Psellos expresses his joy when the visits have taken place. In this series of letters, the mutual relationship between Psellos and his teacher (Mauropous?) is constantly defined as a relationship of friendship, and it is clear that this friendship, with obligations and services, extended beyond the walls of the classroom.

The alumni of a teacher or school were also supposed to show solidarity and provide lifelong support for them. Thus, Psellos explains his relationship with the monastery *Ta Narsou*, to which a school was attached, in the following way:¹⁷

¹⁴ Cf. poems 9 to 11 in M. De Groote (ed.), *Christophori Mitylenaii Versuum Variorum Collectio Cryptensis* (Turnhout, 2012).

¹⁵ For the identification with Mauropous, see Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα και έργο*, 74, and Chapter 5, this volume.

¹⁶ The words *διδασκαλίας* and *μαθημάτων* in KD 13, at 15.14–15 and 17, unequivocally refer to education.

¹⁷ For the letter and the monastery, see P. Gautier, 'Précisions historiques sur le monastère de Ta Narsou', *REB* 34 (1976), 101–10. Gautier rightly advises ignoring the hypotheses formulated in P. Joannou, 'Psellos et le monastère Ta Narsou', *BZ* 44 (1951), 283–90. See also Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 212–13.

'I was born in its neighbourhood and I was raised in it, and I was accustomed to bring the *tropheia* to this monastery which raised me.'¹⁸ The word *τροφεία*, the payments children give to their parents to compensate for the costs incurred in raising them, is indicative of the ethics of reciprocity connected with schooling (curiously, the same expression returns almost literally in a twelfth-century letter about the same monastery)¹⁹. The letter also states that the monks consider Psellos an influential protector. This protection is indeed provided by Psellos, in this very letter (where he asks a powerful person to safeguard the monastery against troubles),²⁰ and in some other letters addressed to the *krites* of the Aegean. It can be inferred that Psellos had received elementary education in the monastery *Ta Narsou*,²¹ and for that reason continued to subsidize and protect this monastery in later life, presumably as a *charistikarios*.

Psellos' best-known teacher was, of course, John Mauropous. Since Marc Lauxtermann, in Chapter 5, treats their mutual relationship in depth, I will focus only on those passages where Psellos explicitly recalls their former teacher-pupil relationship.

S 182 expresses Psellos' feelings of gratitude towards his former teacher. Among the praises showered on him, none pleases him so much as Mauropous' testimonies about Psellos' excellence in his studies. They surpass those of Plato about his pupil Aristotle. Thus, Mauropous' testimonies (also recorded in letters, it seems) are the basis of Psellos' growing reputation and self-confidence in the intellectual milieu he frequents, and the source of admiration from all over the city. Psellos will repay his teacher by praising him in everyone's presence, including the emperor. Reputation and appearances are everything that matters: Psellos 'is considered' (p. 462.20: ἡγημαί) the best of all intellectuals, he 'appears great to the crowd' (p. 463.19: παρὰ τοὺς πολλοὺς ὀφθείην) thanks to Mauropous' letters, etc. G 33 revolves around the same theme as S 182. Psellos is elated by Mauropous' 'testimonies' about Psellos' education. For him, the letter that Mauropous sent is an authoritative certificate of Psellos' qualities, to which he can refer in front of everyone.

S 183 is another declaration of gratitude towards his former teacher. Psellos says that he uses his rhetorical talents to extol Mauropous in circles of friends and in the presence of the emperor. Mauropous had apparently disapproved of such an effort, and had assumed a severe tone. Psellos' letter concludes:²²

¹⁸ S 135, at 378.27–379.1: γεγέννημαι περὶ αὐτὴν καὶ ἀνατέθραμμαί ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ εἴωθα τροφεία κομίζεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆ ἀναθρεψαμένη.

¹⁹ For this letter, see Gautier, 'Ta Narsou'.

²⁰ According to Gautier, 'Ta Narsou', 109, this person is Nicholas Skleros. For my doubts that the 'krites of the Aegean' is always identical with Nicholas Skleros, see p. 21.

²¹ See also Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 213.

²² S 183, at 466.30–467.6: Ἰσθι τοιγαροῦν, ὡς σύ μοι μόνος καὶ τῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ λόγων πατήρ, καὶ παιδαγωγὸς εἶ τις ἐν ἡμῖν ἀρετῇ, καὶ τῶν θειοτέρων μυσταγωγός, καὶ οὐδέν σοι τούτων ἐπιλήσομαι, οὔτε μὴν ἐλάττων δόξω περὶ τὰς ἀμοιβάς, διδοῦς οὐ χρήματα, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους, τοὺς μὲν ἀπό

You should know that you alone are the father of my words, and the mentor of any virtue that can be found in me, and the initiator in more divine matters, and I will not forget any of these things, nor will I appear to be inferior in the matter of reciprocities, for I will not give money, but my own words, either from my tongue, with fluency, or in letters, with skill. If only you would be considerate with me, changing your stance and abandoning your implacability and severity.

The letter is built upon the idea that a pupil should pay due remuneration to his teacher for the education received. Their teacher–student relationship is considered eternal and unforgettable: it does not stop when teaching stops. In this letter, Psellos says that they will conduct a sublime and superior exchange, one of words, as befits a teacher and his student.²³ As appears from the rest of the letter, this exchange is nonetheless efficient on a very concrete level, for Psellos manages to enhance Mauropous’ reputation and to lobby for his return to Constantinople precisely by means of his words (that is, his persuasive powers). In other letters, too, Psellos shows that he is recognizant of Mauropous’ teaching, for example in KD 45, where he pays his respects by saying that Mauropous was ‘the father of his words’ who planted the first seeds of Psellos’ eloquence. This gives an extra splendour and dimension to their close friendship.

The letters already discussed give us an impression of how a newly graduated student would be introduced into the group of intellectuals. Recommendations from their teachers, themselves expressed in letters, functioned as certificates of their qualities. Reciprocity is a central element in a friendship between teacher and pupil: especially when pupils themselves gain an influential position, they in turn help their teacher.

A NETWORK OF FELLOW STUDENTS

As we have seen in the case of KD 12, fellow students were inclined to form ‘cliques’ or ‘circles’, grouped around the charismatic figure of their teacher. These ‘cliques’ formed the nucleus of intellectual circles in eleventh-century Byzantium. As Ljubarskij remarks, some of Mauropous’ letters refer to this ‘circle of students’ as a circle of friends who stick together as if they were a family.²⁴ This social

γλώττης καὶ σὺν εὐροΐα, τοὺς δέ, ἐν γράμμασί τε καὶ κατὰ τέχνην, μόνον ἰλήκοις ἡμῖν καὶ μεταβάλοις τὴν γνώμην, μετὰ γων τοῦ ἀπαραιτήτου τε καὶ σφοδροῦ.

²³ On ‘exchanges of words’ versus material exchanges in letters, see F. Bernard, ‘Exchanging *Logoi* for *Aloga*: Cultural Capital and Material Capital in a Letter of Michael Psellos’, *BMGs* 35 (2011), 134–48.

²⁴ Mauropous, letters 58 and 24; see Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα καὶ ἔργο*, 71.

bond is also markedly present in several letters of Psellos addressed to former school friends.²⁵

KD 11, translated in this volume, is addressed to an unknown person. Psellos is at this time still a *krites* in the province, which he probably was in a quite early phase of his career.²⁶ The letter enumerates all the reasons why former fellow students should remain friends. Education shared in common is the ideal bond upon which to base a friendship, argues Psellos. As becomes clear from the letter, this bond also included a common lifestyle. Typically, the letter begins with the salutation ‘spiritual brother’ (πνευματικὴ ἀδελφεί): the recipient has grown up together with Psellos, so their bond is like a spiritual brotherhood. The letter itself complains about Psellos’ present troubled situation in the province. At the end a certain Stylianos is mentioned, who is said to be part of the ‘company’ and who presumably also was a former school friend. The letter teems with allusions to ancient poetry and mythology, as if to remind his school friend of the typical ingredients of their education.

According to its lemma, KD 16 was addressed to a certain Romanos, fellow student (Ῥωμανῶ συμμαθητῆ); and I believe that KD 17 is addressed to the same person. In both letters, Psellos says he hopes that the many intervening years have not extinguished the flame of friendship, which is based on their earlier shared education. KD 16 is a request to send some *schede* (more about this letter below). KD 17 is a typical letter complaining about his friend’s silence. Psellos wants to strengthen the bonds with his friend, making an emphatic appeal to their status as former fellow students. He puts it this way: ‘You are merciless and implacable, forgetting our ancient friendship and our common education, the lessons, and all our boyish games and jokes. I still remember them—even more: I will also remember them.’²⁷ From this letter, as well as from KD 11, we can conclude that the common education not only provided these young men with a common basis of knowledge, but also allowed them to develop a common behaviour, complete with games and jokes. These features, more impenetrable and more difficult to copy than formal knowledge, reinforce a sense of exclusivity and solidarity in this sub-community of young men; *asteiotes* (‘urbanity’) can be considered as the principal behavioural code.²⁸

²⁵ For a brief overview of (most of) these letters, see Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα και έργο*, 71–2.

²⁶ For a translation of and commentary on this letter, see also Riedinger, ‘Quatre étapes’, 10–12. Riedinger proposes to identify the recipient with Niketas, the *maistor* of St Peter; Tinnefeld, ‘Freundschaft’, 55 and n. 64 proposes Ioannes Xiphilinos. I consider both identifications highly speculative.

²⁷ KD 17, at 21.25–29: νηλεῆς σὺ καὶ ἀμείλιχος μηδὲ παλαιᾶς μεμνημένος φιλίας μηδὲ κοινῆς παιδείας, μὴ μαθημάτων, μὴ ὅσα παιδικὰ προσπαίγματα τέ καὶ ἀστεΐσματα. ὦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἔτι μέμνημαι, προσθήσω δέ, ὅτι καὶ μεμνήσομαι.

²⁸ C. Cupane, ‘Στήλη τῆς ἀστειότητος: Byzantinische Vorstellungen weltlicher Vollkommenheit in Realität und Fiktion’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 45 (2011), 193–209; F. Bernard, ‘Asteiotes and the Ideal of the Urbane Intellectual in the Byzantine Eleventh Century’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 47 (2013), 129–42.

KD 25 is another letter in which Psellos takes care of the network of his former school friends. According to its lemma, it was sent to ‘George, a fellow student’, who is addressed in the letter as *συμμαθητῶν ἄριστε* (31.25). The letters to this George (KD 25–6) display a typical relationship of intellectual *philia*. Psellos admires George’s talent for writing, and the letters are full of banter and perhaps irony. S 125, to John, *ostiaris* and *pronotarios tou dromou*, also hints at their common education, giving Psellos the right to suppose that John will appreciate his letters.²⁹

Another former fellow student is Nicholas Skleros, quite an important associate of Psellos. In several letters addressed to him (KD 37, 44, 56, 63), it appears that Psellos tried to arrange a favourable retirement from Nicholas’s office of *krites* of the Aegean, an undertaking that was eventually successful. It is often assumed that an anonymous *krites* of the Aegean to whom a number of other letters are addressed is identical to this Nicholas Skleros, but this identification has been debated.³⁰ In KD 63, Psellos announces that his machinations to relieve Nicholas from his office of *krites* are having the desired effect on the emperor: Nicholas does not have to go physically to the area of his jurisdiction, but he is allowed to retire to his estate of Mitza Kathara. In a generous gesture, Psellos states: ‘Even if I were not your brother, not a real friend, not someone who shared the same education as you, [...] I would not forsake suffering any of the hardships if that could be to your advantage.’³¹ This is a short but clear indication that Psellos and Nicholas Skleros have studied together, and that both understand that this status induces Psellos to take appropriate steps.

In the abovementioned quote, we find a reference to the relationship of brotherhood. In the other letters to Nicholas Skleros, Psellos consistently addresses him as ‘brother’, together with an adjective that refers to education: *λογιώτατε ἀδελφές*,³² *σοφώτατε καὶ περιπόθητε ἀδελφές*,³³ and *σοφώτατε ἀδελφές*.³⁴ I suspect that these addresses of brotherhood are grounded in their status as former fellow students. Besides, the fact that these forms of address are completely lacking in the letters to the anonymous *krites* of the Aegean suggest that he is not to be identified with Nicholas Skleros.

The letters to former fellow students are effectively part of what we would now call an ‘old boy network’. These men (always men) followed the typical career path of a member of the eleventh-century civil and intellectual elite, and

²⁹ S 125, at 373.12–13. For this letter, see also Riedinger, ‘Quatre étapes’, 8–9.

³⁰ Gautier, ‘Ta Narsou’, 105, thinks they are the same person. The list of addressees in S. Papaioannou, ‘Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Edition’, *JÖB* 48 (1998), 67–117, however, considers them as two separate persons. I adopt this view (see also p. 18).

³¹ KD 63, at 96.8–11: *καὶ γὰρ εἰ μὴ ἀδελφός ἦν, εἰ μὴ φίλος ἀληθής, εἰ μὴ τῆς αὐτῆς σοῦ παιδεύσεως κεκοινωνηκώς [...], οὐδὲν ὅτιοῦν τῶν δυσχερῶν ὑπὲρ σοῦ παρητησάμην παθεῖν.*

³² KD 37, at 60.17.

³³ KD 44, at 73.9.

³⁴ KD 56, at 88.8.

would therefore have felt a strong solidarity with each other. The ‘old school-boys’ share a distinctive mentality, a distinctive lifestyle, and a distinctive social decorum, and Psellos’ letters make a great effort to bring out this distinction. It is one of the means of creating a relationship of ‘horizontal solidarities’, which, as H el ene Ahrweiler’s brilliant study shows, defined the social dynamics of the civil class in eleventh-century Byzantine society.³⁵ It is an informal network, in which friendships are used as instrumental relationships.³⁶ As in the example of KD 63, the old boys’ network is used to circumvent official decisions, by influencing powerful persons via informal channels. This common bond is also mentioned by Psellos in other genres, most notably perhaps in the funeral oration for Niketas, *maistor* of the school of St Peter and former fellow student.³⁷

THE TEACHER AT WORK

Far more important for Psellos’ network, in comparison with his past as a student, is his status as teacher. A first group of letters that I would like to discuss gives us insight into some practical matters of Psellos’ day-to-day teaching. They show us Psellos as a ‘teacher at work’.

When he fell ill, he had to call in some of his connections to take care of his students. In KD 24, he writes a letter to Esaias, a *proximos*.³⁸ The letter bearer is the son of a certain Theophanes, and a pupil of Psellos. Because of his teacher’s illness, his instruction was discontinued, and he had not written a single *schedos* since. Psellos entrusts Esaias with the education of the boy. Another letter is a request for a colleague to share educational material (KD 16; see above). Two boys are studying orthography with Psellos. They have solved all the *schede* that Psellos himself had once solved. Now he asks his friend Romanos, his former fellow student, whether he could provide Psellos with some *schede*, once more putting his network of former fellow students to work.

Both letters unmistakably indicate that Psellos taught grammar and used the popular method of the *schedos*. In this respect, Psellos does not differ greatly from other teachers of the period, who all seem pre-eminently concerned with the *schedos* exercise—a riddle-like orthographical problem that

³⁵ H. Ahrweiler, ‘Recherches sur la soci et  byzantine au XIe si ecle: nouvelles hi erarchies et nouvelles solidarit es’, *TM* 6 (1976), 99–124.

³⁶ For instrumental friendships in Byzantium, see M. Mullett, ‘Byzantium: A Friendly Society?’, *Past and Present* 118 (1988), 3–24.

³⁷ *Orationes funebres* 4, esp. 170.17–25.

³⁸ A *proximos* was the assistant teacher at a Byzantine school.

students had to solve and for which, especially in the eleventh century, many interschool contests were organized.³⁹

Some other letters are also intimately connected with Psellos' teaching practice. Two intriguing letters, S 187 and 188, contain a miscellaneous hotchpotch of knowledge (arithmetic, biology, music, etc.). At the end of these letters, it emerges that they were intended to teach a boy some subject matter. Psellos offers here ready-to-use teaching material, complete with some pedagogic advice: a teacher should first arouse the interest of a boy, and show him the beauty of rhetoric, before proceeding to 'drink from the Aristotelian cups'.⁴⁰

I will leave aside here letters dealing with the hierarchy and remuneration of teachers, such as the well-known and much-debated letters S 162 and S 168, which concern imperial or patriarchal influence in the appointment and remuneration of teachers,⁴¹ and S 198 and 199, where Psellos seems to complain about a low teaching position.⁴²

A letter could also function as a tool to transmit knowledge from a distance. Although the conventions of elegance and conciseness normally prevent the letter from embarking on lengthy exposés, there are ways in which the epistolary discourse could include transmission of knowledge. Most of these letters are replies to very specific questions from friends. Letter KD 101, addressed to *caesar* John Doukas, is written in answer to some questions from Psellos' protector about a Hippocratean quote and about the diaphragm. Another friend had enquired why beds are often not made of the same material (KD 187). In S 85 and 86, the intertwining of transmission of knowledge and usual expressions of friendship is more evident.⁴³ S 85 is addressed to Constantine, the nephew of Keroularios. At the end of this particularly playful letter, Psellos brings up a very curious ability of turtles: if one turtle drinks from a spring, the other turtles will also quench their thirst even without drinking. From the beginning of the following letter (S 86), it appears that Constantine was bewildered by this story. S 86 sets out to show that there are many mysterious phenomena in God's creation, providing an occasion for Psellos to parade a series of paradoxical biological facts. Psellos does not act here as a regular teacher; rather, he sets himself up as an authority towards his friends, answering miscellaneous questions, and integrating this into an epistolary discourse.

³⁹ One of the most accurate studies on the *schedos* is I. Vassis, 'Graeca sunt, non leguntur. Zu den schedographischen Spielereien des Theodoros Prodromos', *BZ* 87 (1994), 1–19. For the contests, see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 259–66.

⁴⁰ See the end of S 187, at 476; for arousing the curiosity of the boy, see S 188, at 480.

⁴¹ Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 225–7 and 230–1.

⁴² See note 11, with M. Jeffreys, 'Psellos and "His Emperors": Fact, Fiction and Genre', in: R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Farnham, 2010), 73–91, at 85.

⁴³ On these letters, see also Papaioannou, *Rhetoric and Authorship*, 151.

As a result, some writings now included in the *philosophica minora* clearly assume the form and the communicative situation of letters.⁴⁴ Thus, at the beginning of a treatise about the question whether the soul is added to the body in a perfect form or not, Psellos declares: ‘you have asked us to assemble the opinions of ancient philosophers and men of our time about this problem, and to explain it by means of a letter’.⁴⁵ Another treatise (*Phil. min.* II, 47), about the definition of death, is called *ἀντιγραφή* in the lemma, a letter in answer to another letter. At the beginning of this work, Psellos states that he will provide a concise answer, in order to respect the form of the letter (*ἐπιστολῆς σχῆμα*). As a result, a case can be made that texts like these should be considered as part of the letter corpus of Psellos,⁴⁶ because from a functional viewpoint they acted as letters, which is even acknowledged in meta-generic statements found in them.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH PUPILS

A particularly interesting series of letters are the letters addressed to a pupil named Kyritzes. In the related record in the *PBW* database one can find the most correct and extensive treatment of the mutual correspondence of Psellos and Kyritzes.⁴⁷ At the heart of this series is KD 209, a letter from Kyritzes to Psellos. Kyritzes begins by saying that he knows that he ‘calls down a wasp’s nest upon himself’—in other words, that he is likely to provoke a sharp reaction from his teacher. The letter complains that three days were not enough to work through a chapter of juridical literature (the chapter is identified by Weiss as the chapter *Restitutio in integrum apud minores* in the tenth book of the *Basilica*).⁴⁸

The letter spawns several reactions from Psellos. In KD 210, headed *ἀντίγραμμα*, Psellos argues that he could not detect any trace of a consistent thought in Kyritzes’ letter. He expresses his indignation at Kyritzes’ irreverence in upbraiding his teacher, then counters the content of Kyritzes’ criticism (where does he get the idea that three days is the norm to cope with the book?),

⁴⁴ See J. Duffy (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Philosophica minora, I: Opuscula logica, physica, allegorica, alia* (Leipzig-Stuttgart, 1992) and M. O’Meara (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Philosophica minora, II: Opuscula psychologica, theologica, daemonologica* (Leipzig-Stuttgart, 1998).

⁴⁵ *Philosophica minora*, II, no. 16, at 76.27–9: ἐκέλευσας ἡμᾶς συναγοχότας τῶν τε τῆς παλαιότητος φιλοσόφων καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀνδρῶν τὰς περὶ τοῦ προβλήματος δόξας ὑψηγήσασθαι δι’ ἐπιστολῆς.

⁴⁶ Papaioannou, ‘Briefcorpus’, 68, n. 4.

⁴⁷ *PBW*, Anonymus 2348 (at <<http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/157785>>). KD 27 and 28 are not recognized by Kurtz and Drexel as letters to Kyritzes.

⁴⁸ Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 34–5.

and then disparages Kyritzes' style and diction, which need much improvement. The key to the connection with the other letters of the 'Kyritzes-cycle' is to be found at the end of KD 210: there, Psellos states that he has condescended to give a reply to Kyritzes' words, teaching him the rhetorical art of refutation.⁴⁹ With this, Psellos in fact refers to letters KD 27 and 28, which take up this point.

In KD 27, Psellos promises to give a refutation of Kyritzes' words on every level, for which there had been no space in the previous letters. Playfully, he proposes to teach Kyritzes how a rhetorical refutation should be made. This is then effectively done in KD 28, which is a sort of *leçon par l'exemple*. He argues that Kyritzes' introduction ('I know I call down a wasp's nest upon myself') is not a suitable way to begin an *ἀντιλογία*, because it is in contravention of the relationship between Psellos and Kyritzes. A pupil should not snub a teacher in this way; he should show gratitude instead, and respect for the honourable title of 'teacher'. Psellos sets straight the hierarchical relationship between teacher and pupil, but at the same time, the letter has a clear didactic goal, and displays Psellos' rhetorical superiority.

In S 16, Psellos turns to the medium of the letter in order to formally upgrade a relationship with a pupil, from merely a casual one to a relationship of friendship. Psellos says that he is very much charmed by the letter that his pupil (unknown to us) had sent to him. He continues:⁵⁰

Since you have exceeded even my highest expectations, and since you have given a philosophic answer, I count you not only among the members of my *thiasos*, but according you precedence, I place you at their head. I therefore appoint you as the leader of the chorus, so that first you are initiated by me, and thereafter the others by you.

Again, we encounter the imagery of an ancient chorus or *thiasos*, coupled with the vocabulary of mystery rites, which Psellos often uses to describe progress in study. The letter tells the pupil that he is now the first among his fellows, and is entitled to teach other pupils. This didactic model, in which an older or more experienced pupil teaches other pupils, is a phenomenon not unknown in Byzantium.⁵¹

With this letter, Psellos binds this promising pupil further to his educational network. As is often the case in the 'pseudo-meritocracy' maintained in

⁴⁹ KD 210: *τοσοῦτόν σοι καταβάς καὶ τοῖς ῥήμασί σου διώξας σε καὶ τὴν τέχνην σε διδάξας τῆς ἀντιρρήσεως*.

⁵⁰ S 16, at 255.20–5: *Ἐπεὶ τοιγαροῦν καὶ ταῖς κρείττοσιν ἡμῶν ἐλπίσι προστέθεικας, καὶ φιλόσοφον τὴν ἀπόκρισιν δέδωκας, οὐ τοῖς ἐμοῖς θιασώταις μόνον συναριθμῶ, ἀλλὰ καὶ προαριθμῶ καὶ προτίθημι, καὶ τοῦ χοροῦ κορυφαῖόν σε τίθημι, ἵν' αὐτὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ πρῶτος μὴν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι τελῶνται παρὰ σοῦ.*

⁵¹ A. Markopoulos, 'De la structure de l'école byzantine : Le maître, les livres et le processus éducatif', in B. Mondrain (ed.), *Lire et écrire à Byzance* (Paris, 2006), 85–96, esp. 88, where some examples from the tenth century are enumerated.

eleventh-century intellectual milieu, excellence in *hoi logoi* is the direct occasion for a hierarchical promotion. The decision to promote him was a direct result of the letter he first wrote to Psellos, which indicates the importance of the epistolographic form in the display of rhetorical skills. Elsewhere we also see glimpses of this status of letters as testimonies of excellence in education. In a funeral oration in honour of a deceased student, Psellos states that this pupil wrote letters to him, with the intention of using Psellos as an *arbiter*.⁵²

CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT PUPILS

We have already pointed to the informal nature of educational organization. The teacher had to rely on his own personal network and reputation to recruit pupils. One result of this is the large number of letters by means of which Psellos keeps the families or protectors of his pupils informed about the progress of their son, nephew, or protégé. Psellos' teaching is portrayed as a service he offers to his 'friends', for which he has to put his network to work, but thanks to which he can also extend this network.

In KD 224, he reassures his friend (Aristenos, who is also known from other letters) that he has been taking good care of his son.⁵³ But he complains that the boy has not been happy with the kind of rhetorical training provided by Psellos, and together with some other pupils, he has been attracted to other teachers, disparagingly called 'milk feeders' by Psellos, who teach a newer art of rhetoric. This episode points to the independence enjoyed by pupils, and the degree to which teachers had to scramble for their pupils. In KD 265, addressed to John Xiphilinos,⁵⁴ Psellos says that he counts his friend's nephew among the most important of his pupils, and he reports that the boy displays a straightforward and steadfast personality, just like his uncle. It would thus seem that Psellos binds these important friends to his network by providing teaching to their younger relatives.

KD 266 is addressed to an anonymous friend. After the usual professions of friendship, Psellos discusses the education of his son:⁵⁵

⁵² P. Gautier, 'Monodies inédites de Michel Psellos', *REB* 36 (1978), 82–151, no. 5: 140.165–9.

⁵³ In his summary of the letter (see the *Summaries*, excursus 5 and indices), Michael Jeffreys assumes that the son himself is to be identified with Aristenos addressed in other letters; in this case, KD 224 is addressed to the father, also named Aristenos.

⁵⁴ For the identity of the addressee, see G. Moore, *Iter Psellianum* (Toronto, 2005), 105.

⁵⁵ KD 266, at 311.12–17: ἐπιμελήσομαι δὲ καὶ τοῦ υἱέος διὰ τε τὸν αὐτοῦ πατέρα καὶ τὴν ἐκείνου φύσιν ἔλκουσάν με πρὸς τὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις ἀρδείαν οὐδὲν ἤττον ἢ δένδρον ὀργῶν πρὸς τὸ θάλλειν τὸν γεωργόν. ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ καὶ τᾶλλα αὐτῷ, ἅπερ αἰτεῖς, προσγενήσεται, ἐκείνου μὲν πρὸς ταῦτα πρωταγωνιστοῦντος, ἐμοῦ δὲ συναρμομένου.

I will take care of your son, for the sake of his father, and for his nature which induces me towards the irrigation of his *logoi*, no less than a tree wanting to blossom induces a peasant (to water it). And hence the other things will also befall him which you have asked for, if he will stand in the front fighting for it, with me helping him.

This last sentence may hint at the bright future that awaits the pupil, if he and his father have confidence in Psellos' teaching. Psellos insinuates that his education can be important for the social advancement of the family.

The same 'agricultural' imagery is also present in S 136. This letter is addressed to a *krites*, and pertains to a *notarios*, who was entrusted to the correspondent by a certain *magistrissa Dalassene*. Psellos' friend had 'planted' the young *notarios* and now Psellos decides to 'irrigate' him, confident that he will grow to full fruition. We may conclude from these metaphors that Psellos' friend has provided some basic schooling for the *notarios* whom he, as a *krites*, was overseeing (see also, e.g., KD 160), and that Psellos now takes over for more advanced education.

The end of KD 34, a long letter to Mauropous about their vicissitudes, contains a report about a certain *ἀνεψιός*, who is now completing his education with Psellos. He hangs on my lips, and loves my texts, Psellos says, and is now full of knowledge and skills. Perhaps it is one of the pupils Psellos was planning to send to Mauropous in due course (see p. 34); perhaps it was a younger relative of Mauropous in the capital.

A more problematic case is KD 230. We can infer from this letter that the recipient (a metropolitan?) had accused Psellos of being responsible for the crimes of a pupil (or former pupil) of his. Psellos argues that he 'has not the habit of teaching things like that',⁵⁶ and he makes the comparison with Jesus Christ, who cannot be held responsible for the crimes of his disciple Judas. In this letter, Psellos seems to acknowledge the proposition that pupils imitate their teachers, but wants to make an exception here, and distances himself from his pupil.

BUILDING A NETWORK OF PUPILS

As we have seen in Psellos' own case, the obligation of a pupil towards his teacher did not end when teaching ended, and teaching itself never really came to an end. As a result, some of Psellos' most important and influential acquaintances in his personal network consist of his former students. As Limousin remarks, Psellos retains a professorial authority that serves him

⁵⁶ KD 230, at 275.17–18.

very well when he intervenes with his pupils, now officials, to defend his interests.⁵⁷ I will discuss these pupils one by one.

One of the most important of Psellos' friends, and one of the most frequent recipients of his letters, is Constantine, *meγas droungarios* (among other titles), along with (to a somewhat lesser degree) his brother Nikephoros, both nephews of the famous patriarch Michael Keroularios. The vicissitudes of the relationship of Psellos with these two nephews are the subject of Chapter 4.⁵⁸ I will concentrate on the educational aspect of their relationship. In his encomium for Michael Keroularios, Psellos mentions that the patriarch sent his nephews to Psellos for their education.⁵⁹ There is also a treatise on friendship that is addressed to the two nephews,⁶⁰ in which friendship and teaching go hand in hand. In his letters, Psellos often reminds them of this bond between teacher and pupil. He does so in letter Sn 1, which is addressed to Constantine and presumably written in the spring of 1069. The beginning of the letter is particularly interesting for our purpose:⁶¹

I know that you are longing for many beautiful letters from me, my charming child of wisdom. And how could it be otherwise, since you owe to them your education and have preferred them above all else?

Psellos refers to his letters as texts with a didactic value, from which his pupils learned what and how to write. The teacher acts as an exemplary author for Constantine, both in youth and in later life. As many letters evidence, Psellos continues to write in his capacity as teacher. The correspondence among friends continues the habits and conventions of letters between teacher and pupil. No matter what their actual social status is, the teacher remains at some level superior: this is brought out in this example by the endearing salutation *τέκνον*, a 'child of his wisdom'.⁶²

S 174, addressed to Nikephoros⁶³ is an answer to a criticism that Psellos had written something that did not preserve a proper philosophical style.⁶⁴ The nephew, here addressed as *λῶστε* (p. 442.15), has still to be initiated into the

⁵⁷ Limousin, 'Lettrés en société', 362, with the examples of KD 100, 116 and 117.

⁵⁸ See also K. Snipes, 'A Letter of Michael Psellos to Constantine the Nephew of Michael Cerularios', *GRBS* 22 (1981), 89–107, and P. Gautier, 'La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzetzes', *REB* 28 (1970), 207–20, esp. 212–16.

⁵⁹ *Orationes funebres* 1, 48, §41.47–50.

⁶⁰ A. Littlewood (ed.), *Michael Psellus. Oratoria minora* (Leipzig, 1985), no. 31.

⁶¹ For the text, see Snipes, 'A Letter of Michael Psellos', 99: *Οἶδα ὅτι ἐρᾶς ἐπιστολῶν ἐμῶν καὶ συχνῶν καὶ καλῶν, ὃ τέκνον σοφίας ἐπήρατον· καὶ πῶς γὰρ οὐ μέλλεις, ὕψ' ὄν ἐτράφης πρὸς παιδείεσιν καὶ ἅ τῶν ἄλλων προέκρινας*; For the translation (slightly adapted), see *ibid.*, 100.

⁶² On this point I differ from Snipes' translation: 'my charming and accomplished young friend' does not convey the image well.

⁶³ For the precise identity of the addressee, see Chapter 4.

⁶⁴ On rhetoric and philosophy in this letter, see Papaioannou, *Rhetoric and Authorship*, 177–8.

more secret rites. Again, Psellos seems willing to continue a kind of teacher–student relationship, complete with relevant vocabulary.

In M 17, the recipient of the letter is Nikephoros, but it is clearly addressed to both brothers. The letter was written fairly late: Psellos has left the capital and the brothers have already assumed high functions and are burdened by public responsibilities.⁶⁵ Towards the end of the letter, Psellos switches to a light-hearted tone. He promises to provide them with a ‘banquet of words’, one of the more playful kind; and he declares that he will use the language they are accustomed to. To bring his friends consolation and entertainment, he offers some games like those they used to play during the poetic phase of their education (*ποιητικὴ παιδεύσις*). As the final sentence of the letter declares, these playful exercises are meant as reminders of Psellos’ friendship. Hence, even after several decades, the memory of their teacher–pupil relationship is considered to endear the nephews to Psellos, who never really stops teaching them. The pair of letters with the marvellous story of the turtle (S 85 and 86), which we treated earlier (p. 23), point to the same fusion of friendship and teaching.

This extends to the forms of address used by Psellos. In M 17, he calls Nikephoros his *ἀνεψιός*. This salutation is also repeatedly used for Constantine.⁶⁶ In KD 31, a letter to console Constantine in a difficult situation, Psellos calls him ‘nephew and dearest of all men’.⁶⁷ In S 1, on the occasion of Constantine’s upcoming marriage, Psellos twice calls him *ἀνεψιός*.⁶⁸ In this letter, as well as in others (KD 214), Psellos addresses Constantine as ‘dear master and nephew’ (*αὐθεντά μου καὶ ἀνεψιέ*). This conveys the double hierarchy that Psellos felt towards the *meḡas droungarios* Constantine: from the viewpoint of social hierarchy in this world, Constantine was now superior, but from the viewpoint of an intellectual relationship, he is the younger, the initiate, the pupil, in sum, ‘the nephew’. Gautier inferred that the salutation ‘nephew’ is due to the fact that Psellos was a close friend of their uncle,⁶⁹ who would be Psellos’ ‘brother’. However, it is hard to find evidence of such a close friendship: the salutation ‘nephew’ for Constantine and Nikephoros may perhaps be based solely on their teacher–student relationship—we will come back to this issue.

At the end of another letter to Constantine (S 184), which tries to clear up a misunderstanding between Constantine and Psellos, we can clearly see the enduring role of the teacher intertwined with that of an ‘epistolographic friend’. The closing address reads as follows: ‘your *protoproedros*, friend,

⁶⁵ See summary of this letter in Part II, which assumes 1069 as the date of the letter.

⁶⁶ A full list in M. Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 2005), 225–6, from which it appears that Psellos uses the address *ἀνεψιέ* six times for Constantine, and once for Nikephoros.

⁶⁷ KD 31, at 46.15–16: *ἀνεψιέ φίλτατε καὶ πάντων ἀνδρῶν κάλλιστε*.

⁶⁸ S 1, at 219.3: *αὐθεντά μου καὶ ἀνεψιέ*, and 221.16: *φίλτατε ἀνεψιέ*.

⁶⁹ See Gautier, ‘La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzetzes’, 213.

brother, servant, teacher'.⁷⁰ Here, Constantine is Psellos' 'brother', whereas, in Sn 1, he was also his *τέκνον*, and mostly he is his 'nephew': all we can conclude is that the vocabulary of kinship is not systematically applied.

Another important former student of Psellos is Pothos, 'the son of the droungarios (or droungaria)'. Some dozen letters are addressed to Pothos (the addresses 'Pothos, son of the droungaria' and 'son of the droungarios' certainly refer to the same person).⁷¹ Pothos is very often, in fact almost systematically, addressed with the term *ἀνεψιός*. Remarkably, all of these instances of *ἀνεψιός* for Pothos are accompanied by the adjectives *λογιώτατος* or *σοφώτατος*.⁷² This clearly throws into relief their teacher-student relationship. Psellos uses his acquaintance with Pothos especially to obtain tax exemption for monasteries that Psellos protects as a *charistikarios*.⁷³ For this, Pothos' function of *krites* of several themata was of great importance. When conducting business with Pothos, Psellos often appeals to their teacher-student relationship.

In KD 38, he mentions the fact that Pothos sees his former teacher as a kind of Olympian Zeus, because he is above the clouds thanks to his wisdom in philosophy. As Ljubarskij suggests, this must refer to his earlier education.⁷⁴ Psellos is trying to avoid a tax that Pothos has imposed on a monastery under Psellos' protection. Because of its playfulness and apparent inside jokes, the letter is difficult to understand: we may deduce that Pothos is asking Psellos to pay taxes in livestock (more likely, their equivalent value; perhaps the *monoprosopon* tax), and that Psellos denies this by saying he is no horseman but a philosopher. In KD 42 there is a problem of land surveying in a village, probably in the *thema* that Pothos manages, and Psellos reminds him of the geometry that they studied together at school.⁷⁵ In KD 250, it appears that Pothos dared to lay hands on the monastery of Acheiropoietos, a monastery protected by Psellos. Psellos reacts sharply, and among the arguments he brings up, he also mentions the fact that he was his friend and teacher (299.15: *ἡμῶν φίλων καὶ διδασκάλων*).

⁷⁰ S 184, at 469.7–8: *ὁ σὸς πρωτοπρόεδρος, φίλος, ἀδελφὸς, δοῦλος, διδάσκαλος*.

⁷¹ See the arguments in Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα καὶ ἔργο*, 156–60. They are considered as one and the same person by Papaioannou, 'Briefcorpus', 102, and by *PBW*, 'Pothos 102', but apparently as two distinct persons by Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede*, 174. See also the *Summaries*, excursus 5. The lemmas above KD 220 and 250 give the fullest identification: 'Pothos, *krites* of Thrace and Macedonia, son of the droungaria'. Whether Pothos is the same person as the *krites* of Macedonia and/or Thrace, addressed in KD 73, 77, 78, and 251, and the same as the 'nephews' addressed in KD 218 and KD 257, needs further research (the case for KD 251, anyhow, is not strong because of the impersonal tone adopted by Psellos in this letter and because if this were a letter to Pothos, Psellos would be telling him twice the same story, in KD 250 and 251).

⁷² Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede*, 174.

⁷³ For these letters to Pothos in relation to Psellos' *charisticariat*, see Weiss, *Beamte*, 146–7.

⁷⁴ Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα καὶ ἔργο*, 157.

⁷⁵ KD 42, at 69.24–25: *ἂ δὴ σοι αὐτὸς ἐν ταῖς κοιναῖς σπουδαῖς συνεφιλοσόφησα*.

KD 53, translated in the Appendix to this chapter, is the most elaborate example of the intertwining of educational relationships and concrete affairs. Pothos was due to exact a certain type of tax, equivalent with, or based on, the *mesomoullaria* (the ‘half-a-mule’),⁷⁶ from a monastery protected by Psellos (probably the Trapeza monastery, the same as in KD 38). He addresses Pothos as ‘most wise pupil’ (*σοφώτατε μαθητά*). He argues that the domains of philosophy and taxation have nothing in common: it is not right that a pupil and teacher should quarrel with each other over such a mundane matter. Psellos has apparently taken steps with the emperor, who has waived the tax. Psellos proposes to drop the affair and urges Pothos to establish a friendly relationship with the abbot of Psellos’ monastery. The letter ends in a vague flurry of philosophical and theological terms, as if Psellos wants to assert his intellectual superiority yet one more time.

The friendship of Pothos and Psellos was reciprocally instrumental: Psellos also helped Pothos when the latter had problems. In KD 41, where Pothos seems to be in trouble, Psellos relates how he, with some other friends, tried his utmost to move the emperor to be favourable towards Pothos.

The bond between teacher and pupil is represented as a sacrosanct union that should be honoured at any time. The sublime character of their relationship should prevent any intrusion of monetary affairs. Therefore, Psellos especially singles out his teaching of ‘philosophy’, to emphasize the spiritual nature of their relationship. But of course this is entirely in his own (material) interest. It ultimately boils down to a hole-and-corner arrangement between two friends. Formal administrative and legal procedures are circumvented through informal channels, which are opened up, and justified, by a teacher–pupil relationship.

The letters of Psellos mention other students as well. There are several addressed to a certain ‘*krites* of Opsikion’, clearly a pupil of Psellos. As Ljubarskij pointed out, there were at least three distinct *kritai* of Opsikion who were correspondents of Psellos, one of whom was the aforementioned Pothos.⁷⁷ One set of letters (KD 99 and 100) is addressed to a *λογιώτατε ἀδελφέ*.⁷⁸ At the end of KD 100, in which Psellos asks his friend to help a certain *krites* with his prospects for a promotion, he offers the following rare self-deprecating joke:⁷⁹

You (I say this without flattering, God be my witness) are superior to Alexander the Great in intelligence and prudence. But you are inferior to him in one aspect only: he had Aristotle as his teacher, and you Psellos.

⁷⁶ Cf. LBG, s.v. ‘*μεσομουλαρία*’, with only one reference, to this very place.

⁷⁷ Ljubarskij, *Προσωπικότητα και έργο*, 156–60, distinguishes between (1) a person called Zomas, (2) Pothos, son of the droungarios, and (3) one or more recipients of letters KD 97–100 and KD 116–20, who is or are pupil(s) of Psellos.

⁷⁸ KD 99, at 127.18.

⁷⁹ KD 100, at 128.28–129.2: *σὺ δὲ (λέγω δὲ ἀκολακεύτως ἐπὶ θεῷ μάρτυρι) κρείττων Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν καὶ τὴν φρόνησιν. τοσοῦτον δὲ ἐλάττων ἐκείνου τυγχάνεις, ὅτι ὁ μὲν τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην εἶχε διδάσκαλον, σὺ δὲ τὸν Ψελλόν.*

KD 116 to 120 are also directed to a *krites* of Opsikion who is addressed as *λογιώτατε ἀδελφέ*,⁸⁰ so he might very well be the same as the *krites* addressed in KD 99 and 100. In KD 116, Psellos complains that the *krites* does not do enough to show the wisdom he received from Psellos (including the knowledge of law). He is encouraged to enjoy the old games (*παιδικά*) that Psellos had introduced to him.⁸¹ In the letters that follow, the *krites* is asked to support a certain *protonotarios* from Nicaea.

Another pupil of Psellos is the *protasekretis* Aristenos. G 24 is a particularly playful letter that does little more than keep alive contact with an intellectual friend. Psellos considers the possibility that Aristenos' letters are better than his: in that case, he would be defeated by his own children.⁸² As Gautier concludes, this may mean that Aristenos was one of Psellos' pupils.⁸³ This is corroborated by the salutation *ἀνεψιός* that Psellos uses for Aristenos in KD 67 (101.3). In this letter, Psellos declares that he is taking appropriate steps with the emperor and his entourage, in order to enable Aristenos to return to the capital, from which he has apparently been banished. Aristenos was also the friend who entrusted the education of his own son to Psellos, albeit not entirely successfully (see earlier analysis of KD 224, with note 54).

Some other ex-pupils are only mentioned cursorily. The *vestarches* Chasanes is addressed as a pupil of Psellos, which provides Psellos with the opportunity to stress the value of words in human life.⁸⁴ And when Psellos asks Sergios Hexamilites, *krites* of Thrakesion, to accept graciously the follies of the monk Elias, Psellos justifies this demand as follows: 'for a teacher has to give commands to a pupil'.⁸⁵ Again, in these two examples, Psellos uses the authority of an ex-teacher to permit himself some license in his dealings with officials (even if, admittedly, the arguments are given in quite a playful manner). Joseph may be another pupil, or at any rate a protégé praised for his eloquence. He is mentioned in Psellos' letters to Aimilianos, patriarch of Antioch, and may have acted as a bridge between both.⁸⁶

RECOMMENDATION OF PUPILS

From the letters in the previous section, it is clear that Psellos had built an extensive network of former pupils, a network in which both parties could

⁸⁰ KD 117, at 144.4.

⁸¹ KD 116, at 143.22–4: *ἀπόλαυε τῶν σῶν, εἰ μὲν βούλει, τῶν ἀρχαίων παιδικῶν, ὧν δὴ τὰς ἀρχὰς παρὰ τῆς ἐμῆς γλώττης εἰλήφεις.*

⁸² G 24, at 175.31: *Εἴην γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ τῶν ἐμῶν παίδων νικώμενος.*

⁸³ Gautier, 'Quelques lettres', 175, n. 2. See also G. Weiss, 'Forschungen zu den noch nicht edierten Schriften des Michael Psellos', *Byzantina* 4 (1972), 9–52, at 31.

⁸⁴ S 172, at 439.25. See also Weiss, *Beamte*, 224, n. 402.

⁸⁵ G 27, at 180.22–3: *δεῖ γὰρ διδάσκαλον ἐντέλλεσθαι μαθητῇ.*

⁸⁶ See also *Summaries*, excursus 5.

benefit from each other's services. Psellos continuously reminds them of their former educational relationship, which enables him to make all kinds of requests and to make concrete material gains. The advantages are of course mutual: when pupils finished their studies and took the first steps into the dangerous world of bureaucracy, they needed any help they could get. This does not emerge only from letters: Psellos also took the occasion of a *basilikos logos* to attract the attention of the emperor to his pupils there present, who might be preparing to give a public rhetorical demonstration themselves.⁸⁷ Of course, Psellos' influential contacts at court were of primary importance here, and this no doubt gave leverage to his network of pupils and pupils' families.

One of the most valuable advantages Psellos could give to his former pupils was his recommendation. Very frequently, this is crystallized into an age-old genre, the introduction letter. Most were sent to far-away *kritai* or bishops. Very often, the letter bearer himself is recommended.⁸⁸ Thanks to the recommendation of their influential teacher, Psellos' pupils could be sent to one of his connections, who would take care of them, and who would provide a basis for their administrative careers.

A typical letter of recommendation is KD 91. This letter, which we have translated in the Appendix to this chapter, is addressed to the *krites* of Drougoubiteia. It is a recommendation for the letter bearer (the letter begins with *οὗτος ἐκεῖνος*), who is sent from a friend to a friend, as Psellos specifies. Psellos asks his friend not to disappoint the confidence that the pupil has in Psellos and his friend. He then goes on to praise the qualities of his pupil: he is obedient, unselfish, sharp-witted, modest, undemanding, and, most importantly, he has received his education from Psellos. The service that Psellos is offering his pupil here is an *οἰκέλωσις*, that is, the making of an acquaintance. Psellos establishes the contacts that a newly graduated student would need so much. Again, the reputation of the teacher is decisive: Psellos advertises his personal teaching as one of the greatest advantages at the disposal of this novice.

There is also a string of letters in which Psellos introduces a young *krites* to various ecclesiastical hierarchs in Northern Anatolia. Eva de Vries-van der Velden put forward the hypothesis that in each of these cases Psellos is introducing his own son-in-law, whom she identifies with Basileios Maleses.⁸⁹ My reading of these letters in light of the educational aspect of Psellos'

⁸⁷ G.T. Dennis (ed.), *Michaeli Pselli Orationes Panegyricae* (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1994), no. 6, 98.261–99.292.

⁸⁸ See also M. Mullett, 'Writing in Early Medieval Byzantium', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990), 156–85, esp. 191.

⁸⁹ E. de Vries-Van Der Velden, 'Psellos et son genre', *BF* 23 (1996), 109–49; see also *PBW*, 'Anonymous 2173' (at <<http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/157611>>) and the *Summaries* by Michael Jeffreys, who supports the view that these letters are addressed to one and the same person, Psellos' adoptive grandson, likely to be identified with Basileios Maleses.

network has led me to a different conclusion, and, without wanting to challenge De Vries' attractive hypothesis in its entirety, I should like to present here as a working hypothesis that the letters to these Anatolian bishops pertain to several of Psellos' pupils.

The letter that most clearly seems to refer to a son-in-law, or adoptive family member, is S 35. In this letter, Psellos asks the bishop of Amaseia how the *krites* of Armeniaka is doing. This *krites* is called 'my son, and your nephew'.⁹⁰ Psellos has given him clear instructions to act kindly towards the bishop; otherwise, the bishop may beat him, but probably this will not be necessary, as Psellos has educated him properly. Then the letter goes on to vilify Sabbaites, Psellos' well-known *bête noire*. That the bishop may beat the *krites*, is probably not to be taken literally, but it does refer playfully, in my view, to real practices in educating pupils, and makes it all the more clear that a pupil is referred to here. Moreover, Psellos uses the quite unambiguous verb *ἐκπαιδεύειν*.⁹¹ To be true, the reference to a 'son' is quite uncommon for his pupils, but it is not altogether absent (it is used for protégés, not biological sons, in KD 189 and 204). In my reading, this letter encourages the bishop to be considerate to his ex-pupil, whom Psellos calls 'son' so that he can be called 'nephew' by the bishop, a ploy to endear the insecure *krites* to the bishop.

It is very likely that this *krites* is the same man who is also recommended to the bishop of Amaseia in KD 58. There, Psellos reassures his friend that he will receive Psellos himself, only slightly better, because the *krites* has received instruction and teaching (*δεδιδάκται*) from Psellos. With this conceit, Psellos in fact reuses a common motif from epistolography, namely the 'image of the self', to a new effect: it is not the letter, but the letter bearer and pupil who is the image of Psellos, because he is such a faithful imitation of his teacher.

Another pupil was sent as a *krites* to none other than Psellos' old master Mauropous, who was at that time the metropolitan of Euchaita. At the end of S 80, Psellos says that the flow of his words has made him almost forget to ask how 'his' *krites* is doing. He asks whether he still preserves the imprint of Psellos' education,⁹² and whether he imitates his old teacher and respects his instruction. If not, Mauropous is allowed to punish him.

This young judge educated by Psellos may be the same as the judge mentioned in KD 54, another letter to Mauropous. Using a common *topos* in this context, Psellos says that Mauropous will see Psellos through the *krites*, because he is such a perfect imitation of him. He expresses his hopes that Mauropous may be able to safeguard his protégé from the troubles that afflict

⁹⁰ S 35, at 269.18: *ὁ ἐμὸς μὲν υἱός, σὸς δὲ γνησιώτατος ἀνεψιός.*

⁹¹ According to De Vries-van der Velden, 'Psellos et son genre', 113–14, this pertains to a 'modelling' of his son-in-law, just like he had undertaken in the case of his first projected son-in-law, Elpidios Kenchrès.

⁹² S 80, at 314.23–4: *πότερον σώζει τοὺς χαρακτῆρας τῆς ἡμετέρας παιδείσεως.*

him and to provide for him a safe haven. Psellos also briefly mentions that he has received education from him.⁹³ Psellos mentions ‘the exigencies of nature’ that induce him to seek protection for the *krites*; in De Vries’ view, this can only refer to family ties.⁹⁴ In the argument of the letter, teeming with a Psellian blend of philosophical parlance, the *krites* is a piece of reality ‘emanating’ from Psellos’ soul, which now connects with Mauropous’ soul. That his soul has unphilosophical ‘exigencies of nature’, in my interpretation, refers to the *krites*’ concrete material needs.⁹⁵

In KD 57, Psellos recommends a young *krites* to the metropolitan of Neokaisareia: he is a perfect imitation of Psellos, and Psellos vouches for his liability. Again, the conceit of ‘a new Psellos’ is used: Psellos says that his friend will receive ‘me through my man’. Psellos explicitly mentions that the *krites* is young of age.⁹⁶ Psellos introduces him also as τὸν ἄνθρωπον τοῦτον, which seems to indicate a certain distance and social superiority. Again, I believe that a young pupil is meant here, someone whom Psellos is eager to promote and protect, but not a close family member of Psellos.

A certain pattern can be discerned in these letters. Clerical functionaries in the province are asked to be kindly disposed towards a young man who occupies an administrative function, mostly a *krites*. As emerges from several sources, being *krites* in a far-away province was something of an initiation ritual, an unenviable but necessary stage in a successful career;⁹⁷ it is no surprise, then, that Psellos also mentions their youth.

There are several elements in these letters that I find difficult to bring into accordance with the identification as Psellos’ son-in-law: the clearly inferior status of the protégés, who are at the disposal of the bishops, so that they are even (albeit perhaps in jest) entitled to beat him; the fact that the young *kritai* are sent to *different* sees in Anatolia; the rather clear references to education and schooling; and the fact that *kritai* rotated quicker than we are accustomed to think, so that Psellos may have known several *kritai* of one given province.⁹⁸ Finally, as a text delivered to his pupils (*or. min.* 22), which we will discuss in the next section, makes clear, Psellos had consciously developed this language of kinship to apply it to his students, complete with the idea that pupils should imitate their teacher: hence the conceit of ‘another Psellos’. In my view, there are at least three separate recommended persons: first, the *krites* of Armeniaka sent off to the bishop of Amaseia (S 35 and KD 58); second, someone sent off to the metropolitan of Neokaisareia (KD 57); and third, a *krites* sent to Mauropous, metropolitan of Euchaita (S 80 and KD 54).

⁹³ KD 54, at 87.8–10: εἰ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς τέχνην τινά, τὴν μὲν ἐκ φύσεως, τὴν δὲ μεμάθηκε παρ’ ἐμοῦ.

⁹⁴ De Vries-van der Velden, ‘Psellos et son gendre’, 118.

⁹⁵ On Psellos’ definition of ‘nature’, see Papaioannou, *Rhetoric and Authorship*, 149–52.

⁹⁶ KD 57, at 90.7: νέος τὴν ἡλικίαν.

⁹⁷ Ahrweiler, ‘Nouvelles hiérarchies’, 110.

⁹⁸ See for instance the several *kritai* of Opsikion (n. 77).

Apart from this series of letters to North Anatolian bishops, there are several other recommendation letters in Psellos' corpus, but only a few that clearly refer to pupils. In S 111, Psellos recommends the letter bearer to the metropolitan of Patras. He is full of praise for the man he is sending off to his friend, even being jealous because they will have each other's company. There is no explicit mention that this letter bearer was Psellos' pupil, but at any rate he assures the recipient that his protégé is 'full of good education'.⁹⁹ In KD 204, Psellos is advancing the cause of a monk called Nicholas to the patriarch, an affair for which he asks the help of the addressee; the phrase 'my brilliant and wise child', for Nicholas, may indicate that he had been pupil of Psellos.

There are also many letters that introduce a *notarios*, mostly sent to a *krites* of a province; some of them might have been students of Psellos. In KD 61, for example, Psellos has taken on the *notarios* for education, but he does not think particularly highly of his protégé: his friend is allowed to punish him if he is not satisfied with his behaviour (see also KD 109 and 110). *Notarioi* such as this one are described in disparaging terms; they were certainly not Psellos' prime pupils (if pupils at all).¹⁰⁰

LANGUAGE OF KINSHIP

In Byzantium, spiritual relationships are often expressed through the language of (biological) kinship.¹⁰¹ I want to argue here that Psellos made a special application of this language of kinship to relationships rooted in education.

In the letters to former fellow students, as we have seen, Psellos typically addresses them with 'brother'; he also explicitly equates their relationship with a form of spiritual brotherhood. We can attribute this to the fact that this specific social group, mostly deprived of important aristocratic familial ties, developed a new kind of kinship.¹⁰² As Michael Grünbart's overview of forms of address points out, the salutation *λογιώτατος ἀδελφός* is used exclusively by Psellos.¹⁰³ The word *ἀδελφός*, combined with an adjective that refers to their education, conveys the sense of having a strong solidarity based on intellectual premises: the class of fellow students amounts to a spiritual family. Of course, the salutation 'brother' is not exclusively used for former fellow

⁹⁹ S 111, at 356.17: *τὴν ψυχὴν ἐν παιδευσίᾳ μεστός*.

¹⁰⁰ Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 118–19 believes that these were notary slaves, quickly prepared for their humble profession by Psellos; this view underestimates the degree of playfulness in the letters.

¹⁰¹ See R. Macrides, 'The Byzantine Godfather', *BMGS* 11 (1987), 139–62 and M. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot, 1997), 172–7.

¹⁰² For this process, see also Ahrweiler, 'Recherches', and Limousin, 'Lettrés en société', 364.

¹⁰³ Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede*, 218.

students:¹⁰⁴ it can also refer to colleagues, (clerical) officials of equal rank, and Psellos also applies it to Mauropous, for instance.

Psellos uses the term *ἀνεψιός* very frequently (more frequently than other Byzantine authors) to address his circle of present and former pupils. On the one hand, we can suppose that Psellos especially recruited his pupils among his ‘spiritual brothers’, whose sons are, as a result, his ‘nephews’.¹⁰⁵ But such a relationship is hard to demonstrate in many cases. Moreover, Psellos connects the form of address *ἀνεψιός* more than any author with epithets of learnedness. Therefore, it is natural to assume that Psellos uses ‘nephew’ as an endearing salutation for his students, without any other family relationship being present.¹⁰⁶ The use of the term may have been inspired by the spiritual guidance an uncle would offer to his nephew. In Byzantine society, the uncle (mostly a bishop) is often entrusted with the education, spiritual and otherwise, of his nephews. By addressing them as *ἀνεψιός*, Psellos may indicate that he now takes over this relationship.

One passage in an oration to his pupils (*or. min.* 22), upbraiding them for being late in class, is relevant for this issue. Psellos sets straight the relationship of respect and honour that should exist between teacher and students:¹⁰⁷

I have looked after you and pampered you, while you were of this kind; and I have called you children, or brothers, or other names that refer to family ties, urging you, with the sweetness of these forms of address, towards imitation of me.

Psellos here lays bare, in an explicit way, the purposes of the ‘vocabulary of kinship’. It confirms the coherence of a ‘clique’ of a teacher with his students: they are a spiritual family, the teacher playing the role of the archetypical ‘uncle’ providing for their education, and taking care of them. This should lead them to imitate their teacher, who acts a model for them. This also includes an emotional appeal: the relationship between teacher and pupil is a sacrosanct union akin to blood ties. Also in KD 11, to a ‘spiritual brother’ (translated in the Appendix to this chapter), Psellos draws attention to the idea that common education engenders the right ‘to address each other properly’.¹⁰⁸

Hence, I think that, particularly in the case of Psellos, we should interpret the language of kinship in this more spiritual sense, often reminding the reader of present or past educational relationships. It is my impression,

¹⁰⁴ For the address of brother, see *ibid.*, 123–8. See also 159–61, and esp. 161, for Psellos’ exceptional use of the term ‘brother’ for Mauropous.

¹⁰⁵ Ahrweiler, ‘Recherches’, 109; Mullett, ‘Friendly Society’, 7. See also Macrides, ‘Godfather’, 144 for Psellos’ exceptional use of the term ‘nephews’.

¹⁰⁶ For the issue, see also Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede*, 174–5, and Limousin, ‘Lettrés en société’, 362–3.

¹⁰⁷ *Or. min.* 22, at 79.15–18: ἐγὼ τοιούτους ὄντας καὶ περιειπόμεν καὶ ἔσανον, καὶ νῦν μὲν παῖδας, νῦν δὲ ἀδελφούς ἐπωνόμαζον, νῦν δὲ ἄλλω τῷ τῆς συγγενείας ὀνόματι, τῶν τοιούτων κλήσεων τῷ ἡδεῖ ἐπανάγων ὑμᾶς πρὸς τὴν μίμησιν.

¹⁰⁸ KD 11, at 12.22: τὰ εἰκότα προσαγορεύειν.

contrary to De Vries' opinion,¹⁰⁹ that Psellos explicitly specifies when he is talking about a blood relative when he wants to clear up any misunderstanding, instead of the other way round.¹¹⁰ But in many letters, the distinction between Psellos' pupils and his mere protégés is difficult to determine. When Psellos recommends someone who is 'related' (*συγγενής*),¹¹¹ or one of his 'acquaintances' (*οἰκέιοι*),¹¹² or 'his people' (*ἐμός*),¹¹³ can this possibly refer to a pupil? Can we assume that anyone addressed with *ἀνεψιέ* (as the *krites* of Kibyrraiotai in KD 50) is, or has been, a pupil of Psellos? And how can we explain the fact that 'brothers' can also be pupils, as evidenced in KD 100, KD 116, G 27, and S 184? I would tentatively suggest, especially on the basis of *or. min.* 22, that Psellos used the language of kinship as a way to appeal to educational relationships, and that in this respect he went further than other Byzantine authors; but there is no rigid system in his kinship vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

It emerges from the letters discussed in this contribution that Psellos used educational networks as efficient channels for mutual services. He remained in touch with former teachers, former fellow pupils, and former pupils of his own. Psellos represents their relationship as a kind of sacrosanct union and an emanation of intellectual *philia*. The vocabulary of kinship, and the continuity of the medium of contact (namely letters), are elements that contribute to the sublime intellectuality of their relationship. Moreover, Psellos successfully combines his connections *extra muros* with his reputation as a teacher, the one reinforcing the other. The roles of Psellos the teacher and Psellos the writer of letters often merge into one; letters were used as a medium for teaching, and the transmission of knowledge pervaded his personal letters.

Of course, the present study is no more than a first step in charting Psellos' teaching network. For a more complete picture of Psellos' teaching, other texts should also be taken into account, notably his funeral orations for students, and the many treatises and writings addressed to his sometimes unruly pupils.¹¹⁴ Moreover, as has become apparent from this study, biographical and prosopographical details will need to be filled in. There is still much work ahead in this area, and undoubtedly there is still much left to discover on the educational background of Byzantine texts.

¹⁰⁹ See De Vries, 'Gendre', 112, where it is argued that Psellos excludes any doubt when he is talking about 'sons' in the metaphorical sense.

¹¹⁰ See for instance KD 169, where the phrase *ἐμοὶ κατὰ γένος προσήκουσα* is used.

¹¹¹ E.g. KD 90, at 119.3; KD 165. ¹¹² E.g. KD 92, at 120.10.

¹¹³ E.g. S 34, at 268.22; KD 152, at 176.2. ¹¹⁴ Psellos, *Oratoria minora*, nos. 18–31.

APPENDIX: KD 11, KD 53, AND KD 91

KD 11 [To a fellow student]

If there is one thing, oh my spiritual brother, that brings us together and binds us and unites us, it is the long-lasting schooling and the common education we took, as well as (if I may say so) a unifying and elegant life style (what bond or what harmony is more harmonious than this?) which continue to preserve and to harmonize friendship (*philia*). Since the situation is thus and since our friendship is so securely supported and based on these Pindaric ‘golden columns’,¹¹⁵ it is a natural consequence that we write to each other, address each other properly and embrace each other.

If it were within my abilities, with a prayer or some other means, to change my nature into that of the birds (to use the words of that lyrical poet),¹¹⁶ I would come to you flying, so that I could embrace you with my song. For, while I praise the skills of Daedalus and his achievements, I cannot admire his intellect, because he wanted to entrust the safety of his son to soluble wax. Since it is not possible that our nature can agree to this, I move myself on earth, and I use, as far as is possible, the wings of my desire. At any rate, Desire is the father of the Erotes, and painters mostly depict the Erotes with wings.

You should know, however, that I am making my way amongst snares and pacing the battlements, my brother; for the malice of the local population and the deceptiveness and the stupidity that nests in these people, even worse than in Kerkopes,¹¹⁷ disturbs and maddens and offends me to no small degree. Therefore, it will not end well here with me, even if we judge and sentence better than Minos and Rhadamanthys. But entrusting our case to God, and considering all impossible things possible, as if He would be present, we keep our desire intact and make some gains. As for obtaining our goals completely, as I said, the malice of the locals forbids that.¹¹⁸

At any rate, may I see you as I wish to, and my wishes are like your own desires. You desire to be healthy in spirit and body; if you are indeed, the other things will follow. Greet the fine Stylianos most endearingly, for he belongs to us and to our old company.

KD 53 To the son of the droungaria [=Pothos]

What is in common between a learned man and the exaction of a ‘beast-of-burden-tax’? Or else—what is in common between a teacher in philosophy and the contribution of a ‘half-a-mule-tax’,¹¹⁹ my most wise pupil? We are thus condemned both, you to exact, I to pay. And the hardest part is that you are exacting from me, and I am ordered to give. But, lest we should suffer this from each other, and lest a

¹¹⁵ Allusion to Pindar, *Ol.* 6.2.

¹¹⁶ The famous poem of the archaic poet Alcman, fr. 26, is alluded to here.

¹¹⁷ Mischievous thieves from ancient mythology, captured by Hercules.

¹¹⁸ I must confess that the Greek here is obscure to me: the addition ‘as I said’ seems illogical.

¹¹⁹ I have chosen to translate (instead of merely transliterate) the terms *monoprosopon* and *mesomoullaria* (a *hapax*) in order to bring out Psellos’ indignation about the mundane nature of the matter.

pupil and a teacher should fight with each other, and *logos* should quarrel with *logos*, and kindred things should be opposed to each other, we are both freed from our fate, and neither am I destined to give you the taxes, nor you to exact what is demanded.

The emperor has reconciled us, and what your intelligence would have done, he has now, before you, accomplished. He delivers us both, you from the trouble not to have exacted what was due, me from the worry of having to pay the charge by any means. Hence, there can be no gratitude for any act of gift on your part. On the other hand, if you should appear gracious and really eager to please my monastery, not to mention if you should be abundantly generous, then we will take into account not only those favours, but also the present one.

As for now, the very rhetoric 'pay up' is the preamble to the future. What do I mean by this? Give yourself entirely to the abbot, and establish my friendship even more, esteem him worthy of your favours, support and ground the signs of your friendship to him as if on a firm foundation and give him an indication, in short, of the goodwill you want to show him.

Perhaps you do not like the tricks of rhetoric, perhaps you prick up your ears for philosophy only and you are simply deaf to the art of sophistry? Then you have also from philosophy the miraculous presages of your future stance towards the abbot. The precursory appearances of the *hypostaseis* and the nature that forms a prototype for bodies become a convenient receptacle of the souls and announcements of the occupation of the endless earth by God, and accordingly the migration of the heathen and the replacement of Israel.¹²⁰ If you want, come to imitate this in all aspects; if not, may you receive what is due and may you gain something from philosophy for your teacher of philosophy.

KD 91 To the *krites* of Drougoubiteia

This is the man about whom I make this request, oh most learned of all men, and most dear to me. He has left now, trusting in me and in you, because he is sent, and is being acquainted, by a friend to a friend. And truly, this man is able to assist you in the best possible way, and he does not want to seek any advantage whatsoever. He is sharp-witted, moderate in his pride, he knows to 'philosophize' at the right time, he is content with little, and most important of all: he has enjoyed my education, not the one that adorns the soul with words, but the education that regulates the character, something that will be most advantageous to the present moment and to your judgment.

So, such a man is this, and such a master has he received. But you, not only you have not had contact with me by letters, but also you have not offered me the sweet conversation of speech; for it is not the truth that shows the shadow, but rather the shadow that shows the truth. Hence, send me letters, in whatever way you want, either in Attic, or in the common tongue. If you atticize, you will meet another atticist. However, if you speak in the common dialect, I will also keep to the words of

¹²⁰ I must confess that I do not exactly understand what Psellos means here. The vocabulary is similar to the use of mystical notions in ps.-Dionysius, especially his *De caelesti hierarchia*. I interpret it that he wants Pothos to understand that he can prepare the soul of the abbot to his (and Psellos') advantage.

comrades. At any rate, you should pour the common features of our characters into each cup, and the different composition of words should not alter the uniformity of our minds. Do not fear that you should encounter me thundering while you breathe forth quietly: I am both able to come down heavily as a wind from the Hellespont,¹²¹ and to blow gently like a zephyr.

¹²¹ This is an allusion to a fragment of Aelius Aeristides, discussed by (and only known to us through) Hermogenes, *Peri ideon*, book 1, ch. 6.

Michael Psellos and the Monastery

Michael Jeffreys

There is still controversy over the religious convictions of Michael Psellos, especially his attitude to monks.¹ However, when he spoke of monasticism, he knew what he was talking about. When he was a teenager both his parents moved to monasteries after the death of his elder sister in childbirth. The impulse came from his mother, whose ascetic commitment dominates her son's biography of her.² His father, on the other hand, accepted intellectual and spiritual inferiority to his wife. Until his father's death, probably c.1040, Psellos visited them both regularly when in the capital. In the next decade Psellos and his wife were bringing up their daughter Styliane, whose early death he lamented in the most emotional text surviving from Byzantium, stressing the psychological exhaustion of both parents.³ His wife then disappears from his story. At the end of his life he would speak of the loss of his dearest kin (KD 214). He knew where one was buried, and barely remembered

¹ A. Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden-Boston, 1999), according to its blurb, 'argues that although the *Chronographia* contains a fascinating historical narrative, it is really a disguised philosophical work which, if read carefully, reveals Psellos' revolutionary views on politics and religion'. Kaldellis is particularly convinced of Psellos' strong opposition to monasticism (ibid., esp. 80–9). Reactions to his proposals have been varied. The present author believes that if Psellos' works are studied as a whole, the *Chronographia* proves more devoted to enhancing its literary fascination than to other aspects of its content: see M. Jeffreys, 'Psellos and "His Emperors": Fact, Fiction and Genre', in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Farnham, 2010), 73–91. Equally, I think that he enjoys 'crossing discursive boundaries' especially in ancient and religious contexts (the phrase is that of S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013), 238). In other words, he likes to make provocative statements. His attitude towards monasticism will be studied here much more by what he does, and with whom, than what he says.

² For the early phase of his life we are dependent on his *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ*, in K. N. Sathas (ed.), *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. V (Paris, 1876), 3–61; trans. A. Kaldellis et al., *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters: The Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos* (Notre Dame, 2006), 51–109.

³ *Εἰς τὴν θυγατέρα Στυλιανὴν πρὸ ὄρας γάμου τελευτήσασαν*, in Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. V, 62–87; trans. Kaldellis, *Mothers*, 111–38.

the other, who was no less buried.⁴ The first must be Styliane, the second can only be his wife. I agree with Eva de Vries-van der Velden⁵ that the best reading of the phrase about his wife is that she was alive, but inaccessible: probably a similar monastic vocation to that of Psellos' mother affected his wife in response to an equivalent family tragedy.

Psellos flourished under the patronage of Constantine IX Monomachos (reigned 1041–1055): but despite a plethora of biographical details about this time, its chronology is hard to reconstruct. One fixed point was set in a study published in 1976—that he was appointed to a chair of philosophy in 1047, at the same time as his colleague and rival Ioannes Xiphilinos became *nomophylax*, the equivalent of a chair of law.⁶ But there is no consensus over the remaining eight years of Constantine's reign. Though many details are irrelevant here, we must investigate the reasons for Psellos' tonsure in 1054 and his withdrawal to a monastery on Mt Olympos in Bithynia around the end of that year.

Psellos was preceded to Olympos by Xiphilinos. This is confirmed by five letters he sent to his friend there from Constantinople. As we shall see, before he left the capital, Psellos wrote thirteen surviving letters proclaiming or implicitly acknowledging plans for tonsure. He maintains that he had to trick the emperor into confirming his decision to leave,⁷ so I assume that most of the thirteen were written after approval was given. If the emperor had got to hear the content of some of the letters, the trick might not have worked. I estimate that these letters cover at least a year, pushing the time when he announced his intentions well back into 1053, maybe even to 1052. Xiphilinos left shortly before Psellos' announcement.⁸ But as we look back from this point, serious uncertainty begins. Was Xiphilinos *nomophylax* till he left for Olympos? Studies of the law school have become more and more inclined to the view that it soon failed.⁹ Psellos says that Xiphilinos left the capital out of anger that he was not supported by Constantine IX when attacked.¹⁰ There were probably several attacks: what relation do they have to that made by the elderly judge Ophrydas, seen in the defence of Xiphilinos written by Psellos?¹¹

⁴ Τῶν δὲ φιλάτων τὸ μὲν οἶδα οἱ γῆς κατορώρυκται, τὸ δέ, οὐκ ἔλαττον κατορωρυγμένον, μικροῦ δεῖν καὶ ἡγνόηκα. See my translation of the letter in the Appendix to Chapter 4.

⁵ E. de Vries-van der Velden, 'Psellos et son gendre', *BF* 23 (1996), 109–49.

⁶ See J. Lefort, 'Rhétorique et politique: trois discours de Jean Mauropous en 1047', *TM* 6 (1976), 265–303. This well-argued article provided a small, secure platform amid what was previously chronological chaos.

⁷ D. R. Reinsch (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia* (Berlin-Boston, 2014): henceforward 'Psellos, *Chronographia*', VI 197–9; I. Polemis (ed.), *Michael Psellus: Orationes funebres*, vol. I (Berlin-Boston, 2014), no. 3: henceforward 'Psellos, *Funeral oration for Xiphilinos*', 15.1–50.

⁸ According to Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos*, 13.20–32, Psellos' announcement was made as he refused to help Constantine IX by discouraging Xiphilinos' withdrawal.

⁹ See the *Summaries*, excursus 17.4, and the associated Bibliography.

¹⁰ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos*, 12.18–59.

¹¹ See the *Summaries*, excursus 17.3.

What of the government's other intellectuals? How do the 'banishment' of Ioannes Mauropous to Euchaita and the dismissal of Constantine Leichoudes fit the story?¹² Did Psellos and Xiphilinos leave voluntarily to avoid Constantine IX's disturbing unpredictability, as Psellos says, or should we suspect coercion?

Above all, what is the relevance of a passage in Psellos' funerary oration on Xiphilinos used by Paul Lemerle (reorganizing a proposal of Wanda Wolska-Conus) as a full pattern for the employment of both Xiphilinos and Psellos between 1047 and their tonsure?¹³ The wording is unclear, speaks of movement from the palace to teaching and back, and establishes stages in the story which would be crucial if there were clear signs of the time frame involved. Since by Lefort's narrative of the events of 1047, the foundation of the law-school was immediately followed by a half-year of chaos during the revolt of Leon Tornikios, I wonder if this passage applies just to the years 1047–8? This would let Xiphilinos continue as *nomophylax* till 1052–3, giving clearer motivation to his decision to withdraw, which would coincide with leaving his dominant legal position. The narrative is harder to write with two stages involved in the decision. Fortunately we may leave these issues in limbo as irrelevant to present concerns.¹⁴

There was another problem, little mentioned outside his letters: a populist party in the church, represented by the patriarch Michael Keroularios, was unhappy with Psellos' strong pursuit of pagan learning, despite his insistence that Christian theology and philosophy held the first place in his heart. As he announced that he would give up imperial patronage for monastic asylum, they must have sensed a chance to make him mend his ways.¹⁵ But the letters confirm that it was Psellos who took the initiative over tonsure, probably through a pact with Xiphilinos; before 1054 he was in disfavour with Keroularios and his supporters, but not really persecuted. One difficult adverb referring in a later letter to possible earlier persecution, *ἐπετείως*, will need discussion.

Eventually Psellos left the capital for the mountain. Then information becomes scarce. Xiphilinos and other monastic correspondents now needed no letters, for he was with them. From previous letters we know that Xiphilinos, as a new monk, was discouraged by his superiors from writing too many letters.¹⁶ This rule was doubtless also applied to Psellos. He wrote a long history of the founder of his monastery, and four short pieces on the beautiful

¹² For Mauropous, see Chapter 5. For Leichoudes, see Psellos, *Chronographia*, VI 178.1–181.8, and Polemis, *Orationes funebres*, no. 2, 9.1–46.

¹³ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos*, 10.22–51. See P. Lemerle, *Cinq Études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 203–6.

¹⁴ A rather different approach to this issue is adopted by Marc Lauxtermann in Chapter 5, following Lemerle's interpretation of the above passage in the *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos*.

¹⁵ See the *Summaries*, excursus 11.

¹⁶ Especially KD 191 and S 44.

mountain environment.¹⁷ A couple of letters may also be dated tentatively to this time. But within less than a year he was back in the capital. I know of no real attempt on his part to explain why or how he left Olympos.

We know that Psellos' time on Olympos was less than a year because of a satirical verse, protected against easy alteration by metrical form.¹⁸ This claimed that he (satirized as Zeus) was unable to bear, even for a year, the absence of females, described as goddesses, another barb against pagan learning. Why did he leave? Maybe he discovered, for many possible reasons, that monastic life was not for him. For a courtier who claims that the unreliability of Monomachos was insufferable, it must have been important that that emperor had died. Another strong motive must have been that his arrangements for Euphemia were unravelling in a dramatic way, as we learn from a document endorsed by the new Empress Theodora.¹⁹ Furthermore, Theodora promoted as her chief minister Psellos' old friend (and fellow monk) Leon Paraspondylos, from whom he expected an office. But at a time around his departure from Olympos, Psellos, after a long wait, had to accept that Leon would give him no serious help.²⁰ Since the sequence of events is not clear, it is hard to be sure where he was when he waited for a reply to his job application, and whether the potential benefit from Leon was part of his reason for leaving Olympos.

His relations with Keroularios and his party now came to a head, probably before final disappointment by Leon.²¹ Psellos was, in their view, a doubtfully orthodox intellectual and teacher who probably had a critical role in the education of intellectual Byzantine priests. He had shown weakness in seeking refuge in a monastery, and further weakness in not staying there. Persons who, he claims, were under Keroularios' control, made a violent attack, questioning every element in his previous success and his balance between ancient and Christian learning, and demanding statements of orthodox belief (S 139). This was not an offence against an individual, but a public crime. He felt severely persecuted, and Keroularios, whom he had regarded as a friend, gave only intermittent and unpredictable comfort. One adverb referring to the persecution in S 139, *ἐπετείως*, is puzzling. The word seems to be largely restricted to the meaning 'yearly'. But how can persecution happen yearly? Did it perhaps occur at an annual festival or meeting? If this meaning is rejected, there seem to be two possible extensions to the strict meaning, neither really attested elsewhere. Does it mean something like 'year in, year out'? In that case it is the only evidence suggesting that persecution by the church began before Psellos'

¹⁷ P. Gautier, 'Eloge funèbre de Nicolas de la Belle Source', *Byzantina* 6 (1974), 11–69; Psellus, *Oratoria minora* (ed. Littlewood), no. 36.

¹⁸ See the *Summaries*, excursus 13.

²⁰ See the *Summaries*, excursus 12.

¹⁹ See the *Summaries*, excursus 13 (p. 432 n. 39).

²¹ See the *Summaries*, excursuses 11 and 13.

withdrawal to Olympos. Or it might mean 'for a whole year', which would be easier to square with other evidence.

His time on Olympos affected his correspondence in the years which followed in several different ways. He corresponded with those he had met there, sometimes on agendas which reflected their common experience. He was asked to advise others who wished to be tonsured and also monastic communities and individual monks when problems arose. He was offered the headship of monasteries and asked to represent them at court.²² He showed interest in rescinding exclusions placed by ecclesiastics on members of their flocks, especially by *hegoumenoi* on errant monks. Then there were difficulties in reintegrating into political life after tonsure: what offices could he hold, if any?²³ What limitations were there, legal or moral, on the everyday actions of a monk outside the monastery who also held a philosophical chair? There are two references to the fact that he expects to be buried at his beloved Horaia Pege.²⁴

One major area of Psellos' interaction with the monastery has not yet been mentioned. When he entered Olympos, he had already increased the limited wealth derived from his family, and his property probably continued to grow later. Whether as payment in kind or by investing cash he acquired a number of monasteries. A good number of letters deal with the problems and opportunities of this process. He wrote to several *kritai*, some of them his ex-pupils, about monasteries he owned in their themes, asking them to minimize the taxes to which they were liable and respect the exemptions they enjoyed. He was particularly eloquent about monks and nuns who embraced monastic poverty only to find themselves short of the necessities of life. He was prevented from buying another monastery in the 1060s by the theft of a huge sum of money he had saved for the purpose (G 13). Most of the monasteries he controlled seem to have had marginal financial viability. This was not surprising: the ownership of his monasteries was based on the *charistike* system.²⁵ This offered the monastery access to the capital, business experience, and contacts of a well-off patron, usually not a monk, in return for a profit for his (or her) investment of money and expertise. The system was clearly designed for institutions which might not flourish without it. It was

²² See p. 50.

²³ He had already been forced to defend himself to Xiphilinos for accepting the title of *proedros of the philosophers* (M 7), and was later attacked over the general title of *proedros* given him by Isaakios I. He was later made *hypertimos*, probably a special title invented for him as a monk. But a speech is preserved defending himself for accepting that too (see the *Summaries*, excursus 9).

²⁴ KD 177 and KD 228.

²⁵ For the system of *charistike*, see M. Bartusis, s.v. *Charistikion*, *ODB*, vol. I, 412–13; H. Ahrweiler, 'Charisticariat et autres formes d'attribution de fondations pieuses aux Xe–XIe siècles', *ZRVI* 10 (1967), 1–27; repr. in eadem, *Études sur les structures administratives et sociales de Byzance* (London, 1971).

widespread: indeed it is unclear how many successful monasteries there were in which the *charistike* played no role. It is also plain that the system was open to exploitation by unscrupulous *charistikarioi*.

We shall see that Psellos' letters on the *charistike* show attitudes ranging from genuine efforts to make the system work through to humour, in which it is hard not to see an element of cynicism. They offer numerous descriptions of the problems a monastery might encounter. These usually arise in the context of seeking to avoid paying tax—the pleading of a case, not objective discussion. Similar distortions are likely when he seeks judicial help for monasteries he does not own. Thus the picture given may be unreliable over the severity of the problems affecting monasteries, though it is likely to be a better index of the range of different problems they faced. Some of the letters read like historical documents and are, despite the literary banter they may contain between teacher and ex-pupils, real negotiations affecting the lives of the monastic communities discussed. One suspects that an important part of the business plan of the average *charistikarios* was the chance, through contacts, of persuading local thematic officials to interpret the tax laws sympathetically for his or her monasteries. This is what Psellos attempts in many of the letters.

None of the issues just raised will be analysed in what follows. This chapter is a simple catalogue of Psellos' letters concerned with monasteries, arranged as far as possible chronologically. But at times it will be necessary to vary the order, to collect similar letters into two overlapping groups: the larger group deals with the process of becoming a monk, entering a monastery on Mt Olympos, then leaving it and dealing with the consequences of tonsure as he lived as a politically active monk in the world; the smaller discusses the world of the *charistikarios*, using Psellos' direct experience and his attempts to help others. The methodology employed in the catalogue will be that of the oriental carpet salesman, showing piece after piece, arranged in series chosen to mirror the possible interests of academic customers. It is hoped that one or more will take their fancy, and (after expert scrutiny in the original language) find creative use.

Psellos' mother, father, and (probably) wife entered monasteries, his teacher and closest friend ended life as a monk, he himself took refuge in a monastery with another friend, but he soon left and spent the rest of his life at the interface of the lay and the monastic, while investing his money in monasteries. He deserves a hearing on the subject of monasticism.

∴

The first letter hinting that Psellos owned a monastery is KD 13, to Ioannes Mauropous. But this is probably misleading (see 'Agros' section, pp. 53–4). His monasteries are discussed in letters written after his decision to enter a

monastery himself, which is announced or implied in all fourteen letters dated here just before he left for Olympos.²⁶ Three of these, addressed to Zomas, *krites* of Opsikion, are analysed in the *Summaries*, excursus 8.

Five other letters were sent in this period from the capital to Xiphilinos on Olympos. The subjects are largely common: the separation of friends, the role of the letter to bring them together, and worry over the lack of replies, together with issues over Psellos' zeal for tonsure. The latter include his revulsion for the court and its motivations, longing for the structured closeness to God provided on Olympos as opposed to marginalization in the capital (later intensified by tonsure and the adoption of monastic clothing), and his remaining problems: the acceptance of poverty and care for his estates and his family. All these subjects can slip from current and practical levels to theories of *philia*, the model Cappadocians, and more general topics of Christian devotion. Each letter adds particular points: S 44 criticizes the monastic authorities for restricting Xiphilinos' letters, wondering whether the latter's arrogance is playing a role; KD 191, the fullest statement, repeats this thought, and speaks of the need to have his own letters ready for the boat's departure for Olympos; M 5 examines the metaphorical voyage to Olympos in which he is currently becalmed, already admitting a devotion to pagan literature that annoys Xiphilinos; in KD 273 he defends his delay via the parable of workers in the vineyard, claiming not to be using his wife as an excuse, while he has also acquired another monastery, Kellia, and sends a monk to arrange its acceptance; S 37 shows him living as a monk at court, a black pebble among brilliant gemstones.

Of the remaining six letters, two are concerned with return to court after tonsure (S 114–15). One asks the *mystikos* whether the emperor is willing to accept him back, while the other (after a positive reply to the first) addresses Constantine IX himself in flattering terms, with almost comic impatience to see him again. KD 267 addresses a monk he calls a spiritual father, constructed in several images as living on a mountain top, sending sweet letters which make Psellos want to free himself from the capital to join him. The mountain is high, but the monk's voice is audible from the foothills. The letter sounds like an early stage in Psellos' decision to go to Olympos. In S 101 Psellos thanks his correspondent for a sweet letter advising against tonsure, but complains that all the exempla he is asked to follow (e.g. Moses) have divinely sanctioned roles in the world, whereas he has none. It is unclear what stage his monastic vocation has reached. KD 170 reassures a correspondent on Olympos that his vocation is real and will bring him to the mountain, despite failing to see a visitor to the capital whom he was asked to meet. He discusses

²⁶ See the *Summaries*, excursus 11. These exclude a handful of letters to close friends like Ioannes Mauropous and Michael Keroularios which cannot be dated precisely and may be a little earlier.

their exchange of gifts, coins he sent in exchange for fruit, claiming to have got the best of the deal. Maybe the most interesting of these letters is S 185, written to a monk on Olympos who is an archimandrite. Psellos is replying to a severe letter urging him to shed the burden of matter and rise to God. While recognizing the archimandrite's efforts not to wound him, he feels that he might have been fairer and more helpful. Psellos hopes that the lessons will continue, revealing that his monastic name, Michael, is already decided.

Two letters were probably sent from Olympos: their dating demands two different criteria. In S 125 Psellos says that his message to Ioannes *protonotarios of the dromos* was delivered orally. But he also commends Ioannes for a statement on the Holy Trinity, for which the monks will pray for him. The sudden mention of monks without identification suggests that Psellos is in a monastic community, which must be Olympos. The case of S 177 is more secure. Psellos writes to a *protovestiaros*²⁷ about his friend Esaias, who has to leave Constantinople, but will be looked after by his correspondent. Psellos continues: 'I was hoping to prosper here, but first the distance from you seems a great problem, then other serious issues have arisen; my family [are sick]. With one of them the situation is completely desperate, the other nearly so.'²⁸ Later he complains that where he is, he hears his correspondent's news only by uncertain rumour.²⁹ The two family members, after the death of his natural daughter Styliane, would seem to be his wife and adopted daughter Euphemia. However, in 1053–5 another possibility arises. He engaged Euphemia to a young noble, Elpidios Kenchres, but while Psellos was on Olympos, the arrangement broke down, Elpidios proving incorrigibly uncivilized. Psellos' placement at a distance, where news was scarce, in a spot where he feels disappointed, already hints at the monastery. I suggest that *νοσεῖ γάρ μοι τὰ φίλτατα*, queried earlier by a bracket, might well be translated 'for my family arrangements are breaking down'. But even if it means that his wife and Euphemia are very ill, 1054 remains a likely date.

We have seen in KD 273 that Psellos acquired the monastery of Kellia just before leaving for Olympos. It came apparently with a complete tax exemption, which, he felt, must be firmly announced to thematic officials and defended against erosion in practice. Two letters perform these functions, S 77 and KD 108. Neither is easily dated. S 77, after boasting of the strength of the imperial documentation of its tax privileges, seems to be proposing that the *krites* of Opsikion be entrusted with all his properties in that theme, Kathara, Medikion, and Kellia, a system which is not explained in detail.

²⁷ This is probably his ex-colleague Constantine Leichoudes, the future patriarch.

²⁸ S 177, at p. 455: Ἐμοὶ δὲ ἐλπίζοντι εὐροῆσειν ἐνταῦθα, πρῶτον μὲν ἢ ἀπὸ σοῦ διάστασις μέγα τι κακὸν δοκεῖ, ἔπειτα καὶ ἄλλα δεινὰ συμβεβηκότα, νοσεῖ γάρ μοι τὰ φίλτατα, καὶ τὸ μὲν παντάπασιν ἀπέγνωσται, τὸ δὲ ἐγγὺς ἐστὶν ἀπογνώσεως.

²⁹ S 177, at p. 456: Οἶδαμεν δὲ οὐδὲν τῶν αὐτόθι, εἰ μὴ ὅσον φήμαις ἄλλων ἄλλαις ἐπόμενοι.

This suggests a time of weakness, maybe when Psellos was in the monastery or the subsequent months when he felt persecuted by the church and unable to find a post to return to secular society. KD 108 repeats the same information as S 77, and remembers the previous year, when only a letter from Psellos stopped thematic officials from imposing tax. This previous letter may have been S 77 itself, though the similarity of subject is not fully convincing. Zomas was *krites* of Opsikion up to 1054, when S 190 shows him sick and keen to retire. We may speculate that he succeeded, and that S 77 and KD 108 were sent to ensure that his successor understood the precise fiscal situation of Psellos' properties.

Psellos had always written many letters to monks. But after he left Olympos his monastic correspondence substantially increased. A particular category of letter is formed by those in which monastic communities seem to have sought to use him as their representative at court or in negotiations with secular officials. In KD 201 the nuns of the convent of Sakelline had asked him to negotiate with the *protoasekretis* over the renewal of their *sigillion*, giving him the opportunity to speculate what would happen to Psellos and his correspondent if they failed in their bureaucratic duty. They faced a whole convent of nuns, when one Eve had been enough to ruin Adam. In KD 138 he agreed to meet monks from Antioch on their visits to the capital and act as their spokesman, following a request of the patriarch Aimilianos. S 149–50 seem to be a pair: the eighty monks of S 149 are probably the monks of Mt Ganos in S 150, while his promise in S 150 to do all in his power to help the monks of Ganos probably resulted in the recommendations of S 149. But in S 150 he refuses to become their *hegoumenos*, with self-deprecatory admissions about his real power, and the striking comment that he had never thought of becoming the head of any group, lay or religious.

Some of the monks to whom he wrote were probably contacts from Olympos, like the archimandrite of KD 112, probably the same addressed in S 185 when preparing for tonsure, and the *hegoumenos* of S 166, whom he may have met as a simple monk before promotion. Others simply appear in his letters as part of the epistolary apparatus, like the letter carriers of G 19 and KD 139. A monk is called on to confirm Psellos' hard work in KD 158, and a monastic audience is to test the worth of a text in S 174. S 140 is a reference letter for a monk to a senior cleric, and S 158 recommends a group of monks to a lay administrator. S 196 is a conventional reaction to news of the death of a friend who was a monk. He had used a monk for several important lay tasks just before his own tonsure: a monk was sent to help kyr Georgios the *aktouarios* in connection with Psellos' estates (KD 95), to take over the estate of Kellia on his behalf (KD 273), and to carry an important message to Zomas, *krites* of Opsikion (S 29). One extraordinary monk, Elias Krystoulas, was sent to around ten administrators as a source of amusement and relaxation (see *Summaries*, excursus 4).

Probably before he had himself finished the process of becoming a monk, as we have seen, Psellos gave advice on tonsure to Zomas of Opsikion (S 190). He was later used as a monastic expert by Katakalon Kekaumenos, to whom he gave conventional advice (KD 59, KD 141, KD 30). However, Kekaumenos was disappointed that Psellos could not help him in a quarrel he had with Constantine X. He thought the emperor owed him pay as a *kouropalates*—presumably the last yearly tranche before embracing monastic poverty. Psellos congratulated him on being denied wealth by the monarch of this world, as this would increase rewards from the monarch of the next. Psellos helped Kekaumenos' man in an attempt to persuade the emperor, but to no avail. Similar advice on the monastic state was given to Symeon Kenchres, a rich young man who was tonsured (S 54): Psellos thought the step may have been hasty. By contrast, he excoriated another monk, Pherebios, who criticized Psellos for forcing his way into the palace, but wished to take over that role himself (S 167). Psellos set out a very high standard for the character and attainments of imperial advisors, throwing doubts on Pherebios' morality and learning. A brief word of advice is given to Ioannes Doukas *kaisar* in the 1060s, when Ioannes mentioned the possibility of tonsure (G 4, cf. G 8). Psellos advised him to avoid it: he had tried it himself in his youth, and had not enjoyed it. Ioannes was, in fact, tonsured a decade or so later, in circumstances which left few other choices.³⁰

The last category of monks in his correspondence was those excluded from their monasteries by *hegoumenoi* or generally from Christian congregations by clerical superiors. Two cases involve Antioch (G 23 and S 61), while others concern the monastery of Smilakai (KD 113), an ex-slave left by his master to a monastery, to be freed, but apparently excluded by its *hegoumenos* because of his servile origin (KD 164), a monk from the Hodegon monastery in the capital (KD 204), and another called Kallinikos from an unnamed monastery (KD 205). Psellos' arguments begin from Christian forgiveness for the monks, who are all said to be repentant, their *bona fides* guaranteed by Psellos himself. If the excluded monk was evil, who could better improve him than the excellent bishop or *hegoumenos* who had excluded him and knew his case? He should begin healing at once, or the illness would worsen through lack of guidance, and he would do more harm.

Early references in the letters to the acquisition of monasteries by *charistike* request help from those able to evaluate the potential of monastic lands,

³⁰ He was captured in 1074 by the Norman Roussel de Bailleul, who released him, proclaimed him emperor, and planned to put him on the throne. But Roussel and Ioannes in their turn were captured by the Turkish general Artuq, who allowed Ioannes to be ransomed by Michael VII and Nikephoritzes. So as not to be suspected of rebellion by the latter pair, Ioannes had himself tonsured on the way to Constantinople. See Attaleiates, *History* (Kaldellis and Krallis), 23.9–13; Skylitzes Continuatus (ed. Tsolakakis), 159.4–161.8; Bryennios (ed. Gautier), 177.14–181.22; Zonaras (Bonn), 18.16.23–18.16.29.

operating the system as intended. Profit is defined as Psellos' return on his investment, but he assumes that the monastery and its monks will benefit too. There are several sympathetic laments at bad living standards endured by monks and nuns without such investment, both in his own monasteries and in others he tried to help. Later, however, sympathy is mixed with humour, which sometimes seems in bad taste. Some of Psellos' most memorable, light-hearted letters deal with the purchase and taxation of monasteries. I shall describe three.

The first two address Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos (S 30, S 178). He became a tragic figure in 1063 with the destruction by earthquake of ancient Kyzikos, including much of the contemporary city.³¹ To judge by these letters, probably written just before 1063, Romanos had acted as Psellos' agent to find and purchase suitable monasteries in the Kyzikos area. S 30, after thanks for generous gifts of Kyzikos' produce, asks when the aged owner of the Artigenes monastery will stop mocking his monastery's name ('New-born') and finally die. Romanos must kill him off, verbally at least. He had been badly wrinkled and near death Olympiads ago. Where was Charon when you needed him? Was the old man gaining immortality, or rebirth like Alcestis? However, the letter ends with a wish for his continuing good health.

S 178 gives the background. The old man still survived, blocking the purchase of Artigenes, recommended by Romanos for Psellos' investment. But the letter's novel approach uses an unannounced metaphor of marriage for monastery purchase. After two lines, the headline 'Clerical sex ring' comes to mind, to be slowly replaced by a more innocent truth. Psellos first compares widows with married women. Widows were easier to woo than those with a live husband, who were prettier, but shut away, loyal to their men and a legal trap for lovers. Artigenes was wedded to the old man, who was welcome to her embraces: Psellos preferred Mountania, recently twice widowed. He was better than both her husbands in looks and character, and gave better presents—farm animals, not jewels, as she was a country girl. But she had outlasted two husbands without mourning; he would arrange a co-husband, making himself more desirable by comparison. Artigenes was more attractive, but high-maintenance; poor Mountania would be happy with a smile and an elderly co-investor to make Psellos look young. He asked Romanos to arrange the match.

KD 38, to Pothos, son of the *droungarios*, an ex-student recently appointed thematic *krites*, is different. Pothos was now in a position to control Psellos' tax payments, as powerful as Zeus (with high-flown epithets). Psellos told him he had bought a new monastery, Trapeza, together with two other investors. Pothos as *krites* was pictured as a glorious leader of the cavalry into battle. This may be deconstructed as the reception of military taxes, especially horses.

³¹ Some details in S 79.

Psellos' incompetence is contrasted with Pothos' glory: he was useless with spear or bow, or on horseback. Pothos should stop trying to make him a cavalryman. He would disturb the ranks and run away, taking many others in flight with him. He was out of place in war. His knowledge of Homeric formations would be of little use. The authorities should take the horse he owed and leave him alone.

I shall now say a little about each of the monasteries appearing in Psellos' letters as belonging to him or seriously coveted by him.

Acheiropoietos: This was also called the monastery of the Abramitai, just outside the Golden Gate. It was an obvious calling place for those entering or leaving the city at important moments.³² In KD 77, the monks of the Acheiropoietos attacked the innocent *krites* of Thrace for harm done to the monastery, rather than those really responsible. In KD 124, Psellos asked Nikolaos Skleros to help the monastery—not just its famous icons but also the church and its estates. It is not sure in what capacity Nikolaos' aid was sought. In KD 250, Pothos, now *krites* of Thrace and Macedonia, was said to have harmed the possessions of the monastery. Psellos asked his old pupil in scandalized tones whether this was true. If so, he must stop, not only for reasons of religion and justice, but because Psellos was the *charistikarios*. KD 251, perhaps also to Pothos, refers to a dispute about a water-mill.

Agros: In the years around 1970, Cyril Mango and Ihor Ševčenko visited the remains of some ecclesiastical buildings on the Sea of Marmora.³³ Two of the ruins were identified as monasteries owned by Psellos, Megas Agros and Medikion, the latter also known as the 'monastery of the Holy Fathers'. A role in locating these and sketching their history was played by KD 13, in which Psellos described a sea journey to Medikion, interrupted by a storm and diverted to Agros, which he called 'our' (*ἡμέτερος*) Agros. KD 13, continued by KD 14–15, addresses his teacher, Ioannes Mauropous. Psellos accepts completely the role of student, and uses the letters to apologize in a bantering way for missing a teaching session (see Chapter 5). This suggests a date in the mid to late 1030s. However, if Psellos held two substantial monasteries, that would argue for a date after the mid 1040s, when he had long been earning money in the palace. By then his status was equal to that of his teacher, whom he had introduced into the palace.

More can be said about both monasteries. Among several letters referring to Medikion (see following section on Medikion) is S 29, in which Psellos announces the monastery as a new acquisition and also mentions his future residence on Olympos. It must be dated c.1052–3. There is also a well-dated reference to an estate owned by Psellos which may be called Agros (S 198).

³² See, for example, *De Ceremoniis*, 438.10, 499.6, and 501.10.

³³ C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, 'Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmora', *DOP* 27 (1973), 235–77.

When he left Olympos, in 1055–6, he was bitterly disappointed to receive a contemptuous job offer from Leon Paraspondylos, chief minister of the Empress Theodora. He replied by asking a friend, Psephas, to plead with Leon for a better position, telling him that otherwise Byzantium’s supreme intellectual would have to retreat to a primitive estate. His description of the place is negative, as demanded by the rhetorical point to be made: ‘To Agros! To Agros (or “To the country! To the country!”). I have to the west a tiny little estate; I will go there and lie low...a deserted farmstead, cowsheds, shelters for herdsmen.’ Psellos may be referring to ‘Agros’ or just the countryside outside the city, or allowing deliberate ambiguity. In any case this cannot be Megas Agros, the monastery of the historian Theophanes, or any ecclesiastical building. If ‘Agros’ is a toponym, then it must be the same ‘our Agros’ of KD 13. It would be a small family estate, named perhaps for its nearby monastery. The date in the 1030s suggested by Psellos’ attitude to Mauropous would be confirmed. As for Medikion, it will not have belonged to Psellos until c.1052–3. However, it should be no surprise that when he was able to acquire monasteries, one of the first should be that whose festival he visited in KD 13, and which may have been close to a family estate. It is unlikely that Megas Agros itself was ever in his possession.

Artigenes: see the earlier comments on S 30 and S 178.

Dobrosion(tos): this monastery was probably in the theme of Boleron, in south-western Thrace, near Thessaloniki. It was given to Psellos, after many promises, by a man called Theoktistos, not otherwise identified (KD 89). Psellos was disappointed by the gift, which he claims was in a wilderness, without potential even to feed its monks, who were starving. He used its barbarian name as a rhetorical opposite to glamorized estate-names like ‘Asphodel Meadow’ (G 20). Even so, he asked the *krites* of Boleron to check his negative judgement before giving up hope on the place. Dobrosion was not included in lists of his monasteries dated around the time of his tonsure, and may have been acquired in the second half of the 1050s.

Kathara: this monastery is only mentioned in lists in letters to the *krites* of Opsikion dated just after Psellos left Olympos (KD 200, S 77). It does not appear in earlier pleas to protect his estates. Psellos probably acquired it (like Kellia) around the time of tonsure. Its great glory, a magnificent icon of the Panagia, is the subject of a challenging intellectual description (KD 194), which has survived in the corpus of letters without being formally a letter.

Kellia: this lavra on Olympos came into Psellos’ possession just before he went to the mountain himself, as he notes in a letter to Xiphilinos (KD 273). The latter was already on the mountain, and could presumably help the monk who brought the letter in taking over Kellia. The main advantage of Kellia was its exemption from taxes, as Psellos repeatedly informed local *kritai*, one of whom

seems to have helped him acquire the monastery (S 77). Freedom from tax made the income from its small estates secure and worthwhile. Despite claiming documentary proof of its tax exemption, Psellos had struggled to keep the *krites*' collectors at bay, and expected the problem to be repeated (KD 200, KD 273).

Medikion: This was probably his first monastery—we have seen him visiting it at least once for a festival long before he acquired it (KD 13). When announcing his acquisition, he immediately consulted the local *krites* about a detailed business plan (S 29). After a year or so of ownership, he complained that the *krites* had erred in favouring a neighbouring minor over the monks in a trial over water. Psellos puts his case in a selfish way (KD 140). He later sent a *krites* a topographical sketch of the estate (KD 125), which was near the sea but offered no real view of it. Medikion is included in lists of the monasteries he held around the time of tonsure, which needed special judicial care while he was himself on the mountain or seeking to return to secular society after leaving it (KD 200, S 77). We finally hear of Medikion c.1060, when Psellos asked an emperor (probably Constantine X) to transfer it to his young friend Constantine Lizix (S 29). Lizix fell ill around this time, and this may be a gesture of generosity (as he claims in the letter). However, his previous complaints of the poverty and lack of potential of Medikion leave an impression of irony.

Mountania: See the earlier comments on S 30 and S 178.

Ta Narsou: This Constantinopolitan monastery was a special place for Psellos. He was born and brought up nearby, probably went there for early education (S 135), and received spiritual benefits from subsequent visits (S 65). Later he made repayments for his nurture. He claimed that some monks now thought he was its founder as well as its *charistikarios*. He was not, but he improved it when he could with unspectacular offerings, appropriate to the monks. He asked the *krites* of Aegean Sea to join him in helping the monastery's ship on a voyage to Piraeus (S 135). He also introduced to the *krites* the monastery's *hegoumenos*, a model of piety (KD 126–7). The *hegoumenos* had to care for estates of doubtful profitability, which made the monks go out far and wide; he asked the *krites* to protect them from attacks. He could promise in return the support of the Theotokos and martyrs venerated at Ta Narsou.

Trapeza: the purchase of this monastery was announced to Pothos in KD 38 with military hilarity, as we have seen. Psellos' investment was shared with two others, whose names were to be looked up in the register for tax purposes. The three together made up a mule area.³⁴ Trapeza probably also appears in KD 53, another letter to Pothos, with a reference to half a mule (perhaps his fellow investors made up the other half). Psellos told Pothos that a demeaning battle over the *monoprosopon* levy between ex-teacher and pupil, both philosophers,

³⁴ Presumably a category used in determining the amount of tax to be paid: see *Lexikon zur Byzantinischen Gräzität*, ad locum.

had been avoided. The emperor cancelled the tax in this case, as Pothos would have done himself, saving a philosophical argument. Psellos asked Pothos, as *krites*, to assure the *hegoumenos* of the monastery of his *philia* and support.

It is not clear why Psellos seems to have increased his monastic holdings around the time of his own tonsure (see Kellia, Kathara). Perhaps investment in monasteries was treated somehow as an exception by those enforcing monastic poverty? He would need to provide an income for Euphemia, and may from the start have wished to leave open the possibility of quitting the monastery (with some resources) once his situation improved, for example, by the death of Constantine IX. The plan announced in S 77, to put all his monasteries (or at least those in Opsikion) under the direct control and protection of the *krites*, is difficult to evaluate. It seems to correspond with a moment of serious illness.

We should now pass from monasteries he owned himself, to his attempts to give judicial help in connection with other monasteries, mostly, it seems, owned by others. I shall offer brief treatments of ten interesting cases.

In KD 36, Psellos wrote to Niketas and Ioannes, the Chiot monks who founded Nea Mone. He thanked them for a gift of mastic, and seems to console them in an honourable and sympathetic way for a great loss. This was probably the confiscation of Nea Mone by the Empress Theodora. Nea Mone was returned to them shortly afterwards with the help of the patriarch Michael Keroularios.

In KD 60, Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Aegean Sea to assist an old friend, the noble *patrikia zoste* Anna Radene and her officials, about Homonoia, a monastery she owned. He mentioned another claimant to it, with apparently deficient title. He asked as a favour, that the other man's claims be examined and rejected. This would build up credit with Anna for Psellos, which, he says, was not for erotic purposes.

KD 81 refers to a *vestarches*, owner of the monastery of Melias. Psellos asked the *krites* of Opsikion that Melias not suffer over the *monoprosopon* tax the *vestarches* owed, as he promised to pay it in the capital. Psellos told him to confirm this in writing to the *krites*, to avoid misunderstanding. He asked the *krites* to aid Melias and its small estates, because the *vestarches* had no patron.

KD 221 shows Ioannes Mauropous in an unusual role. He had acquired a monastery called Python for a relative, and improved its estates by buying land and constructing buildings. This investment must be allowed for in the tax assessment of Python's lands. If so, Mauropous would lose no money. Psellos asks the relevant *krites* to go beyond first appearances and establish the truth with scrupulous accuracy.

KD 227 says that Psellos' closest friend in the theme of an unidentified *krites* was the excellent Moses. Psellos invited the *krites* to help him guard Moses' monastery in every way, confirming advantages and solving problems, as the monks' saviour. They just wanted documentary confirmation of established rights.

In M 8, a complex situation was made worse by a monk named Dorotheos, sent with a verbal message to confirm a written petition from his *hegoumenos*. When asked for his message, Dorotheos just repeated the written text. Psellos investigated for himself. He discovered in full detail the status of an estate which the *hegoumenos* wanted to lease, and arranged for the business to be done on the *hegoumenos*' next visit to the city, together with other tasks.

M 11 is an example of the elusive kind of information provided. Much of the letter is missing. The surviving conclusion praises a lifetime of cooperation, Psellos providing eloquent requests and his correspondent more action than was sought. About the problems of an unnamed monastery: if the other knew the case, he could supply missing details and bring to life a monastery which had almost disappeared.

Several letters mention the plight of the wealthy reduced beyond monastic poverty to starvation. In S 99, the rich *vestes* Michael entered the poor monastery of Morocharzanes. But because of some klasmatic land, possessions long held by the monastery were confiscated. Psellos asked the relevant *krites* to leave Morocharzanes alone. Michael, having given up many properties, should not lose his last home too.

In S 119, Psellos wrote to a *krites* about a poor, desperate old monk, who claimed to have been wronged over a monastery he owned. Psellos wondered if he had created the whole scenario like a play, with a cast of monks, unjust oppressors, and abusers, and it was all untrue. But he asked the relevant *krites* to produce a report, either dismissing the story, if untrue, or righting the wrong if it existed.

S 130 is a female version of S 99. He wrote to a *krites* about a nun, who built out of her own money a tiny monastery, and raised a loan to ensure food for her nuns. But one contributor to the loan reneged on the agreement, leaving a real prospect of starvation. The *krites* should try to persuade him to change his mind. If he refused, the affair should be settled so as to achieve justice for all concerned.

A final insight into Psellos' mindset in connection with his status as a monk may be gained from three letters debating his attendance at the second wedding of Constantine, nephew of Keroularios, an ex-student and old friend (S 1, S 83, S 84). The marriage took place around 1072. The first is an early and largely negative reply to Constantine's invitation, speaking of rules governing his behaviour, envious gossip he tried not to encourage, and the public face he cultivated. The second reacts to a promise from Constantine that it will be a philosophical wedding, discussing the possibilities and limitations for tailoring the ceremony to suit monks (other monks might also be invited); he is still not positive, but wonders finally whether he might attend acceptable parts of the ceremony and be kidnapped to stay for the rest. The third is dated after he had enjoyed the ceremony without embarrassment, detailing the fears which had not been realized, using surprising imagery to praise the wedding, and reminding us that he was a philosopher as well as a monk.

These letters have been seen as a sign that Psellos in the last decade of his life returned to a stricter monastic regime without returning to the monastery. There is really no way of putting them in such a context: there is no other occasion where he discussed the possibilities and limits of his public actions with a interlocutor whom he trusted as an equal. My impression is that the letters show the code by which he had lived after leaving Olympos, doubtless with refinements resulting from nearly two decades of experience.

He states that he will attend some parts of the ceremony, but must avoid anything redolent of the hippodrome and theatre, which meant loud music—blaring instruments and a deafening wedding song—and being pelted by women with apples. These prohibitions seem to have been policed by self-appointed censors who tried to legislate on his behaviour in minute detail. It is surprising that the pressure on his behaviour from his profession of philosophy seems at least as great as that from his monastic status, both in his own mind and those of his critics. He feels he ought to make his own decisions, but implies that he generally tried to avoid gossip. For example, he usually abstained from eating and drinking in public, and avoided parties and festivals. He was doubtful whether a wedding could be suitably adapted for him: a cosmetic change did not alter the essence for Psellos, while the removal of important elements might ruin the ritual for Constantine. Perhaps the only way was, as it were, to tie him up after the acceptable part of the ceremony, so he could hear the rest as Odysseus heard the Sirens. He had no real objection to music: after all, David wrote the psalms for performance with instruments. He did succeed in reconciling his conscience and went to the wedding. He found it like the best of the ancient festivals, mixing an intense sexual element with high religion. In an intriguing image, some of Constantine's Graces rose naked from classical springs, others were clothed with holy vestments.³⁵ The music was unaccompanied and solemn.

Throughout his life, Psellos was dominated by twin pressures: intellectual scholarship, largely focussed on topics from the past, and devotion to the monastery. It is clear that he identified more with the former pressure, and at times felt oppressed and even persecuted by the latter. But both were active influences on the way he lived his life. This chapter has shown him constantly reacting with monks and monasteries, and actively choosing that side of his world, for example as a refuge in the biggest crisis of his life, and also as an investment for his earnings from teaching and administrative duties. Modern historians, many of them also devoted to scholarship, largely on the past, should not underestimate the opposing side of the balance which dominated his life.

³⁵ S 84, at 322: οὕτω δὴ καὶ Χάριτες, αἱ μὲν γυμναὶ τῶν πηγῶν ἀναδύουσαι, αἱ δὲ ἱερὰν στολήν ἀμφιέννυται.

Constantine, Nephew of the Patriarch Keroularios, and His Good Friend Michael Psellos

Michael Jeffreys

This chapter documents a friendship between two men, the biography of one of them, and a sketch of his progeny. This unfashionable subject may be justified in several ways. *Constantine,¹ the subject of the biography, is of unexpected importance, adding a detailed and significant persona to the Byzantine ruling class in the second half of the eleventh century, with close connections to several major issues. He is also interesting because he rarely appears in narrative histories. His career is reconstructed from seals, documents, and the letters of his friend Michael Psellos, which need to be put in context. The bones of *Constantine's career may be seen in titles on seals and in the addresses of letters sent him by Psellos—though the chronological articulation of the bones into a skeleton is not easy.²

As well as writing a narrative biography, this chapter must justify changes it will propose to the dating of *Constantine's career. Thus much of it will revolve around the dates of seals and letters. Sigillography and epistolography rarely provide precise dates, and none are available on the seals and letters used here. The dignities and offices they mention must be placed on flexible mental templates based on the thousands of individuals whose careers have already been reconstructed by prosopographers and sigillographers. These templates must be carefully adjusted to fit the appropriate decade, then manipulated to correspond to *Constantine's personal circumstances and the wider historical environment in which he lived. There is an obvious

¹ *Constantine' with an asterisk will be used in this article to distinguish its main character from several other Constantines in contact with him.

² This introduction merely lists unexpected details of *Constantine's career: they will all be discussed later in the chapter with proper annotation.

potential clash between template and individual history. The first tends towards the normal and average, the second may suggest the unusual and extraordinary. The balance must be carefully maintained. The templates allow reconstruction beyond details explicitly provided by the evidence, especially dates; but if templates are allowed to dominate, we may miss personal and institutional tensions which are vital to understanding single biographies and the development of the whole Byzantine system.

Most of these non-narrative sources have long been published, but are now being better organized in the public domain. Beside the full publication of *Constantine's seals by Alexandra Wassiliou-Seibt, Psellos' letters are being re-edited by Stratis Papaioannou and studied and translated in books like this one. Such developments must continue. Byzantinists, who regularly lament their lack of sources, must exploit more completely all categories of sources they do have.

The chapter will begin with a brief historical sketch of *Constantine's life, concentrating on elements which are unusual. The most important evidence will then be set out in tabular form, showing the prevailing dating in each case and the amendments being proposed here. There will then be a page or two to sketch why I find the prevailing views (especially on dates) unsatisfactory. The rest of the chapter will then move chronologically through narrative of *Constantine's career, discussing problems as they arise and quoting evidence at length.

∴

*Constantine's uncle Michael Keroularios made a bid for the throne in 1040, and was later consecrated as patriarch (1042–59). In 1054 he apparently humbled Constantine IX over relations with Rome, and probably still had imperial ambitions for his family, or at least hoped to create a strong faction. A main focus of this was his nephews, *Constantine and Nikephoros. It is impossible to say how high his ambition took them in the system of dignities, and how quickly. But a new kind of promotion followed, and happened twice. In 1057, the patriarch (with some aid from his nephews) drove Michael VI to abdication so that Isaakios I, the victor in a civil war, made a bloodless entry into the city. Isaakios was very grateful, and promoted Keroularios' nephews. The patriarch, who could not be promoted, was given control of some previously imperial appointments in the religious sphere. A year or so later, Keroularios was imprisoned; his nephews too lost their titles. When the patriarch died before his trial, Isaakios, repentant or shamed by public opinion, gave posthumous rehabilitation to the patriarch and honours to the nephews which sound greater than before. How important were these two

surrogate promotions (neither of which are explained in full)? The nephews must at least have reached considerably higher dignities than were expected on their own merits.

The nephews were unusual in other ways. In an age when lineage was important and nearly everybody boasted family surnames, they did not: they just called themselves the patriarch's nephews. Their seals were also idiosyncratic. Keroularios' faction usually put St Michael as tutelary saint on their seals.³ But the nephews, by contrast, chose a narrower family pattern, using St Menas Kallikelados, as did *Constantine's eldest son, who also used no surname. *Constantine as a young man had used a seal showing only his Christian name (twice) and six substantial holy figures, one labelled as St Menas. Did he expect the seal to be recognized as his? After Keroularios' death, Isaakios abdicated and was replaced by Constantine X, from Keroularios' party.⁴ We know of forces opposed to Isaakios, but have no idea how they drove him from office. In the first year or two of Constantine X's reign there was a major revolt against him. Did *Constantine play a role in any of this? Under Constantine X and his empress Eudokia, the nephews' cousin, we would expect them to prosper. In Wassiliou-Seibt's reconstruction of his career, *Constantine was promoted twice during this reign. But he was also tried on a serious charge. Then as Constantine X was dying (1067), Eudokia, chosen as regent for their underage sons, called down on herself blood-curdling curses if she remarried, or used her cousins (*Constantine and Nikephoros) to administer the empire. Why? Later, at the end of the decade of 1070, when Psellos and *Constantine both died, Byzantium was dominated by a dozen warlords with armies. Yet it was the bureaucrat *Constantine who was the first Byzantine to reach the dignity of *sebastos*, the highest in the pre-Kommenian hierarchy. This title was a novelty for Byzantines at the time, though destined to be the basic Komnenian mark of nobility. Why *Constantine?

Neither brother has left surviving letters or other texts, apart from a few impersonal legal documents. Thus the flesh on the skeletons of their careers is provided by others, chiefly Psellos. We can see in his correspondence with them a wide range of their reactions to his different approaches: how, for example, *Constantine overcame Psellos' reluctance, as a philosopher and monk, to attend his wedding. All these unusual features of *Constantine's biography make it disappointing that we have nothing directly from his pen, and few references to him in narrative sources. They might have resolved some

³ J.-C. Cheynet, *La société byzantine: l'apport des sceaux*. 2 vols (Paris, 2008), vol. 1, 285–305.

⁴ The marriage of Eudokia to Constantine X, a widower much older than her and a comrade of Isaakios I from the civil war, was negotiated by Keroularios (see I. Polemis (ed.), *Michael Psellus: Orationes funebres*, vol. I (Berlin-Boston, 2014): henceforward 'Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*'), cf. Psellos *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VII 98 (6), 17–21. This must have been an alternative way of establishing the patriarchal family on the throne—and it was successful. Which was the patriarch's preferred means—by his nephews or by his niece?

of the anomalies. As it is, biographers have to try to decode allusions with dating implications found in the letters, to date the dignities and offices listed on the seals, using the normal templates, and to reconcile the results with the sketchy narratives.

Table 4.1 sets out the most controversial biographical items, with dating from Wassiliou-Seibt's article on the left. An entry is made in the column to the right when this paper proposes to change her date. I have added a few pieces of evidence, largely narrative, which she has not mentioned (after all, her article is mainly concerned with seals): these are also dated in the right-hand column.

Table 4.1. Events in the biography of *Constantine

	Wassiliou-Seibt dating	Biographical items	Dates added or changed in this chapter
[1]	A little before no. 8	Seal: *Constantine (with very elaborate iconography)	before 1057
[2]	1057 (p. 107)	Isaakios I captured Constantinople with Keroularios' help	
[3]		Isaakios gratefully transferred some religious appointments from imperial to patriarchal control, and promoted Keroularios' nephews	1057
[4]	1059 (p. 108)	Keroularios was exiled, and his nephews briefly lost their posts	
[5]	1059 (p. 107)	Death of Keroularios	
[6]		Isaakios, through shame or public opinion or both, gave Keroularios' nephews higher honours than those they had lost	1059
[7]	1059	Replacement of Isaac I by Constantine X	
[8]	1059 to early 1060s (p. 108)	Seal: *Constantine was <i>vestarches, krites of the velon and megas kourator of the sekreton of Mangana</i>	before 1057
[9]		Conspiracy to kill Constantine X as he left the Mangana	1060–1
[10]	c.1065	Seal: *Constantine was <i>magistros and sakellarios</i>	1057
[11]	Probably end of reign of Constantine X	Letter of Psellos addressed to *Constantine as <i>proedros</i> , fearing that he will lose his friend, who is on trial on a serious charge	1060–1
[12]		Constantine X was so ill that he appointed regents; but he soon resumed power, though with declining health	1066
[13]		Document: as Constantine X was dying, his wife Eudokia called down blood-curdling curses on herself if she should ever remarry or appoint her cousins (Keroularios' nephews) to rule*	1067

[14]	1071–2	*Constantine promoted to <i>protoproedros</i>	
[15]	1071–2	Letter of Psellos addressed to *Constantine as <i>protoproedros</i> while referring positively to Eudokia (imprisoned in 1072)	
[16]	1072–3	Seal: *Constantine was <i>protoproedros and logothetes of the herds</i>	
[17]	1073–4 (p. 110, pl. 4)	*Constantine as (<i>megas</i>) <i>droungarios (of the vigla)</i> ; several witnesses	
[18]	End of reign of Michael VII	Constantine appointed <i>epi ton kriseon</i> by Michael VII	1074 or later
[19]		Refusal to spend money during the last years of Michael VII's parsimony was unexpectedly followed by the most spectacular generosity under Nikephoros III—so great that the old system of dignities and offices never recovered	1077–8
[20]		Letter of Psellos addressed to a <i>protoproedros and epi ton kriseon</i> , almost certainly *Constantine	1078
[21]	End of reign	*Constantine appointed <i>sebastos</i>	1078
[22]	1075–8 (p. 112, pl. 5)	Seal: *Constantine was <i>sebastos</i>	1078
[23]	End of reign (p. 112)	Letter of Psellos addressed to *Constantine as <i>sebastos and epi ton kriseon</i>	1078
[24]	1078–9 (text of 1082)	Document: *Constantine died as <i>sebastos and epi ton kriseon</i>	

*Strangely, Wassiliou-Seibt uses the article publishing this document in a footnote to the early part of Constantine X's reign (108, n. 8). The document itself is not mentioned.

Before examining these items in detail, let me prepare the ground by outlining several reasons why I disagree with Wassiliou-Seibt's dating.

[2, 3, 6, and 8]. Keroularios was a dominant, ambitious patriarch who may well (Wassiliou-Seibt suggests) have retained hopes of putting one of his nephews on the throne, as he in fact achieved with his niece Eudokia. He had a dozen years as patriarch before 1057 to have *Constantine promoted. Then there were two occasions (3 and 6) on which Isaac I promoted the nephews, not because of their merits but their uncle's, for political purposes. The first resulted from gratitude, the second from shame. I cannot believe that after these processes, *Constantine still had only the dignities and offices recorded in 8. These were respectable honours for a young man, but not the very high position expected after 3 and 6.

[9–12]. It is hard to see when in Constantine X's reign *Constantine may have been promoted. At the beginning of the reign, whatever dignity he had reached, he had been promoted twice in the last three years, and hardly needed more. Wassiliou-Seibt has him promoted twice in the last two years of Constantine X's reign (10–11). But by this time the emperor was very ill, and almost pathologically afraid that Keroularios' nephews would thwart his

plans to put a Doukas dynasty on the throne. Constantine X feared his young wife, the empress Eudokia, who was also the nephews' first cousin. Eudokia was made to call down extraordinary curses on herself, to prevent her overturning the imperial destiny of her own Doukas children by remarriage or favouring her cousins (12). All the Byzantine establishment were involved to witness the oath. Surely the dying emperor would not promote *Constantine at that moment?

[9, 11, etc.]. Dates are changed in this chapter only by a few years each; but by bringing cause and effect together the operation of the Byzantine governmental system is made much clearer. It is also important not to exclude interesting linkages for inadequate reasons. I think that the trial in which *Constantine was involved (11) was connected with the Mangana conspiracy (9), though the case cannot yet be made convincingly. It would be unwise to exclude this on the basis of dating which is no more convincing than that case.

[16–21]. I have already used these to help establish the date of Michael Psellos' death.⁵ They also have implications for the biography of *Constantine.

[17–21]. Wassiliou-Seibt does not account for the fact that the bureaucrat *Constantine, in a period of warlords with armies, was the first Byzantine to receive the title of *sebastos*. I think an explanation is available from [17–21], together with the Georgian dimension shared by *Constantine, Nikephoros III, and the title *sebastos*.

∴

The main sources for the family of Michael Keroularios (Figure 4.1) are a treatise by Psellos on brotherly love⁶ and a discourse pronounced by Psellos at Keroularios' tomb.⁷ The former text addresses the patriarch's two nephews, who are told to emulate in brotherly affection the patriarch Michael and their own father, whose forename has not survived. Psellos' oration also has the nephews as assumed addressees. Michael Keroularios was the stronger of the earlier pair, but his brother was more sociable, so that he married and had two sons, while Michael remained a bachelor. They had a sister who married Ioannes Makrembolites and was mother of the empress Eudokia Makrembolitissa.

Nothing more is known of the sister. Eudokia married Constantine X before his accession; a little after his death she remarried, to Romanos IV. Just before and just after Romanos' reign, she ruled for some months in her own right.

⁵ M. Jeffreys, 'Michael Psellos in 1078', *BZ* 107 (2014), 77–96.

⁶ Michael Psellus, *Oratoria minora*, ed. A. R. Littlewood (Leipzig, 1985), no. 31, 116–25.

⁷ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*.

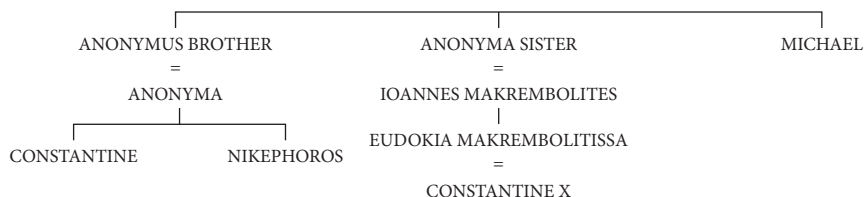


Figure 4.1. The family of the patriarch Michael Keroularios

Michael was the youngest of the family: the sequence of births of his older siblings is unknown.⁸

The defining event for this family was an attempt on the throne by Michael Keroularios, Ioannes Makrembolites, and other unnamed persons, narrated by Skylitzes together with the Bulgarian revolt, which climaxed in 1040. The revolt of the Keroularios-Makrembolites brothers-in-law is also always dated to that year or the next.⁹ Keroularios was not yet patriarch, nor even a priest or monk, and his nephews were young boys. Skylitzes mentions the event in a formulaic way: two aristocrats made an ambitious rebellion, but failed.¹⁰ For further information we are dependent on Psellos' abovementioned encomiastic texts, written from Keroularios' point of view. Their rhetorical techniques almost announce themselves as unreliable. They claim, for example, that the plotters planned to depose Michael IV without harming him, and that Keroularios had no idea that he himself was to be made emperor.¹¹ The revolt failed and the principals, including Michael and the nephews' father, were imprisoned. Michael was threatened with death and became a monk, presumably choosing tonsure instead of execution, though Psellos tries ineffectually to separate the threat from his pious decision.¹² His brother met his death. There is no suggestion of execution or sickness in his case: he suffered a broken heart when sent to a different gaol from his brother Michael¹³—unexpected in a man with a wife and children.

⁸ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*, 5.4–10, shows that Michael was the youngest child; in 7.9–9.14 he is often called younger than his brother. It is less certain that *Constantine was older than his brother, as Nikephoros is often listed before him. The strongest evidence that *Constantine was the elder is in the comparisons of 41.25–41, but the identities of the two brothers there are not completely clear.

⁹ See e.g. J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963–1210)* (Paris, 1996), 51–2 (no. 50).

¹⁰ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. I. Thurn (Berlin; New York, 1973), 412–14.

¹¹ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*, 11.21–12.19. Psellos is indignant that Michael IV, instead of being lenient with the innocent Keroularios, concluded that his popularity among the other conspirators made him the most dangerous of all, and punished him severely.

¹² Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*, 12.29–13.17.

¹³ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*, 14.1–15.17.

The family wealth was confiscated. I once believed that a passage in the *Peira* referring to one of the Keroularios family might be linked to this confiscation—a legal manoeuvre to keep a family estate temporarily.¹⁴ However, it is impossible to establish the sequence of events from the *Peira*'s brief summary, and some signs suggest that it refers to another event and another Keroularios.¹⁵ In any case poverty soon ended. In 1042, when the Paphlagonian dynasty fell, Keroularios returned to favour in the capital and recovered his estates. In 1043 he became patriarch of Constantinople, having first been linked to the church only two or three years earlier, when tonsured in the dubious circumstances described. One can see why opponents (especially westerners) often called him a neophyte patriarch who only became a monk out of human fear.¹⁶

The two fatherless brothers were taken over by their uncle and sent for education to Psellos, thus ensuring a place in history as pupils and later friends of their century's most prolific Byzantine writer. They were probably born in c.1034–5, so they will have been aged around six or seven at their father's death. Psellos says that they hardly remembered their father, and Keroularios was imprinted on them in his place.¹⁷

The next question arising is their absent surname. Michael Keroularios' brother, whatever his Christian name, must have had the same family name, and by rules of nomenclature which were then standard, it should have passed to his children. References are sometimes made in modern scholarship to Constantine and Nikephoros Keroularios. But this has no confirmation in eleventh-century texts. They are always called just the patriarch's nephews. Why?

Part of the answer is gratitude for their uncle's role in bringing them up. It often happened in Byzantium that a bishop was a family's richest member, and that at the death of a relative they undertook to bring up orphaned children, being by definition childless. The convention to express this is well known: a man brought up by an archbishop of Cyprus, for example, might call himself *ὁ τοῦ Κύπρου*, marked by the masculine genitive as 'protégé of the archbishop of Cyprus'. Such persons were often children of a sibling, so the translation is usually 'nephew', unless there are signs of another relationship.

¹⁴ I. Zepos and P. Zepos (eds), *Πεῖρα. Ἐὑσταθίου τοῦ Ρωμαίου*, *Jus Graecoromanum*, vol. 4 (Athens, 1931), §LXV.2.

¹⁵ See A. Kazhdan, 'Some Notes on the Byzantine Prosopography of the Ninth through the Twelfth Centuries', *BF* 12 (1987), 65–76, and F. Tinnefeld, 'Michael I Kerullarios, Patriarch von Konstantinopel (1043–1058): Kritische Überlegungen zu einer Biographie', *JÖB* 39 (1989), 97, n. 14.

¹⁶ E.g. 'abusivus patriarcha neophytus, et solo humano timore habitum monachorum adeptus', in the excommunication left on the altar of Hagia Sophia. See C. Will, *Acta et scripta quae de controversiis ecclesiae graecae et latinae saeculo undecimo composita extant* (Leipzig; Marburg, 1861), 154 col. B, 7–9; Greek translation at 164.29–32 (henceforward Will, *Acta et scripta*).

¹⁷ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Keroularios*, 351–3.

Why did Keroularios' nephews ignore this convention? The see of Constantinople is exceptional, and Michael Keroularios was an exceptional patriarch. He was the first to add 'ecumenical patriarch' to his title of archbishop of Constantinople.¹⁸ With this Michael stressed that his see belonged first to the whole of Christianity, or at least to that part linked to Byzantium, and only on a secondary level to the capital. Thus his nephews could not use a name primarily connecting their uncle to the city. The solution adopted, 'nephews of the patriarch', had no undesirable implications. As we have seen, *Constantine's son Michael, Alexios I's *logothetes of the sekreta*, followed his father in not using a family name. *Constantine, Nikephoros, and Michael all showed on their seals a saint unique to the family, St Menas Kallikelados. This is Wassiliou-Seibt's 'Ausdrucksmittel der Verwandtschaft', and on seals it may be seen as replacing the family name. The reason for the choice of St Menas is unknown.¹⁹

But the way Keroularios' brother and *Constantine's father has been systematically removed from history, so that even his forename has vanished, makes me suspect that there were other reasons to downplay his role. He is said to have died of a broken heart. Surely something is being concealed here? One thinks of suicide, which would make it hard for the brothers to acknowledge their father, and make them adopt unusual naming patterns. This thought was confirmed by finding similar published statements by Paul Lemerle and Jean-Claude Cheynet.²⁰ Psellos' treatise on brotherly love would thus be an attempt to console the two nephews, putting the most positive possible spin on their father's crime. I have investigated surviving material on St Menas, particularly the epithet 'Kallikelados', without finding links, direct or indirect, to suicide.

In 1054, when the nephews were around twenty, an event occurred which made Keroularios notorious among Orthodox patriarchs. Pope Leo IX, annoyed by reports from Constantinople of actions hostile to Rome, sent three legates to investigate on the spot.²¹ After months of friction, they left on the altar of Hagia Sophia a papal bull excommunicating Keroularios and his

¹⁸ This is still part of the title of the Patriarch of Constantinople. The meaning of *οἰκουμενικός* and the date of the first use of the formula are both discussed by V. Laurent, 'Le titre de patriarche oecuménique et la signature patriarcale', *REB* 6 (1948), 5–26; and *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin V.1. L'église* (Paris, 1963), no. 16: he shows that the new phrase appeared on patriarchal seals in 1054.

¹⁹ Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 116.

²⁰ P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur l'onzième siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 259 (henceforward 'Lemerle, *Cinq études*'). Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 52 (no. 50). Cheynet told me in personal conversation that his reasons for speaking of suicide were like mine. Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 107 makes the same assumption.

²¹ Recent treatments include A. Bayer, *Spaltung der Christenheit: Das sogenannte Morgenländische Schisma von 1054* (Cologne-Weimar-Vienna, 2004), esp. 63–116; A. Louth, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church, AD 681–1071* (Crestwood, NY, 2007), 305–18.

supporters. Keroularios then issued a counter-excommunication. This Schism of 1054 was once called the point of division of Catholic western from Orthodox eastern Europe, a turning point in world history. But for many decades this angry exchange caused few practical divisions among Christians anywhere, and its importance is now almost ignored.²² Confessional partisanship over the question among historians, Catholics supporting the legates and the orthodox defending Keroularios, has also been replaced, especially in the west, by politically correct demands for interchurch impartiality. Thus the texts of the schism are now almost unknown, especially in the English-speaking world, and are unfashionably polemical dramatizations of a crisis which itself proved trivial. Keroularios' two nephews play no obvious role, but a possible link is worth mentioning.

One of the worst complaints of the legates is that somebody in Constantinople trampled (physically) on the Catholic host—an act justifying Roman anger. The charge is not rebutted by contemporary Greek texts. It forms part of the Latin bull left in Hagia Sophia, and of its Greek translation made in the entourage of Keroularios. The translation is usually accurate, but at this point there is deviation. The Latin excommunicates the man accused of defiling the host, calling him 'sacellarius ipsius Michaëlis, Constantinus', translated in Greek as *ὁ σακελλάριος τοῦ αὐτοῦ Μιχαῆλ ὁ Νικηφόρος*.²³ The coincidence of the two names with those of Keroularios' nephews is intriguing.²⁴ The changed translation suggests that there were two officers so named in the patriarchate, easily confused by visitors. At least one was a hot-headed opponent of Rome. A similar picture is given by a letter written later in 1054 by Peter, patriarch of Antioch,²⁵ criticizing historical errors in an anti-Latin text of Keroularios. Out of politeness to the patriarch, he blames them on his well-educated but immature *chartophylax*. The picture given is of a patriarchate staffed by educated officials with anti-western sentiments. We shall never know whether it was the patriarch's nephews who caused the legates' confusion.

∴

It is time to discuss *Constantine's *cursus honorum*. The relevant biographical elements of his career have been set out in Table 4.1. I will present the evidence at some length, and discuss its implications in a way which I hope will be intelligible and convincing in itself. The numbering of the elements will be an

²² See J. Ryder, 'Changing Perspectives on 1054', *BMGS* 35 (2011), 20–37.

²³ Compare Will, *Acta et scripta*, 154.11–13 (Latin) with 164.35–6 (Greek).

²⁴ *Constantine is attested as a *sakellarios*, but he combined the office with the dignity of *magistros*, which he cannot have reached before promotion by Isaakios I (1057–9).

²⁵ Will, *Acta et scripta*, 190.8–193.11.

economical way of referring from one element to another, and will allow reference back to the table to see the larger picture. Where Wassiliou-Seibt suggests a date, I shall repeat it from the table.

[1]. Perhaps the earliest element is a seal giving only the forename *Κωνσταντῖνος* (twice) with six holy figures including St Menas Kallikelados, whose presence secures the identification (Wassiliou-Seibt: probably a little before 1059).²⁶ I suggested earlier that this seal, with so little to identify its owner yet using an elaborate iconography, should cause surprise and invite psychological analysis. Did *Constantine expect his ownership to be recognized outside the circle who knew of his iconographical preference—surely a small group for a man in his early twenties? Was he just trying to impose himself on that circle? Does the seal have general implications for his ambitious attitudes and those of Keroularios? Since the dating of *Constantine's young career proposed here reflects earlier promotions than those dated by Wassiliou-Seibt, the seal may have been struck some time before 1057.

[2–3]. Attaleiates on Isaakios I, just after accession (1057):

First above all others, however, he showed respect for the patriarch, honouring him almost like a father, and rendering the latter's nephews illustrious through the highest dignities and functions of state (*ταῖς πρώταις ἀξίαις καὶ πράξεσι*). He also ceded to the Great Church all rights of imperial supervision over the clergy, alienating those rights altogether from the palace, so that henceforth no one would be appointed by the emperor to the administration of the Church or to the care and protection of its holy treasures; both the promotion of personnel and the administration of affairs would lie within the power of the patriarch.²⁷

*Constantine and Nikephoros, under the patronage of their ambitious uncle since boyhood, probably had high dignities for their age. Now they received unusual extra honours to show Isaakios' gratitude to their uncle at his accession.

[4–6]. Isaakios is again the subject, this time of Psellos in the *Chronographia*, as news arrived of Keroularios' death:

Isaac, when he heard of it, his heart immediately touched, bewailed loudly—an unusual thing for him—and mourned him sincerely. He was sorry for the way he had treated the patriarch and often tried to propitiate his soul. As if to justify

²⁶ Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 108, and plate 2.

²⁷ I use the edition of I. Pérez Martín, reprinted and translated by A. Kaldellis and D. Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates: The History* (Cambridge, MA, 2012), 12.2: *πρὸ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων πολὺ τι νέμων αἰδοῦς τῷ πατριάρχῃ, ἴσα καὶ πατέρα ἐτίμα, καὶ τοὺς τούτου ἀνεψιοὺς ταῖς πρώταις ἀξίαις καὶ πράξεσι περιβλέπτους ἀποδεδειχώς. καὶ τὰ τοῖς βασιλικοῖς δικαίοις προσόντα παρὰ τῶν ἱερατικῶν δίκαια τῇ μεγάλῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ καθιεροῖ, καὶ τούτων ἄλλοτριοῖ παντάσῃ τὸ παλάτιον, ὥστε μῆτ' ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκονομίας μῆτε τῆς τῶν ἱερῶν κειμηλίων προνοίας καὶ προστασίας παρὰ βασιλείως τινὰ προχειρίεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τῆς τοῦ πατριάρχου ἐξουσίας ἡρτησθαι καὶ τὴν προχειρίσιν τῶν προσώπων καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων διοίκησιν.*

himself—or rather to appease the dead man—he at once granted to Michael’s family the privilege of speaking freely in his presence, and they were allowed to join his nearest retinue.²⁸

Isaakios heard of Keroularios’ death from a messenger who expected him to be delighted. The emperor’s response suggests genuine remorse to Psellos. But Isaakios was afraid to put the popular patriarch on trial in the city, and so set up a special court in Thrace. His death before trial made the emperor nervous over public opinion in the capital, mixing remorse with fear. The resultant favours for Keroularios’ family (who had lost their positions as the patriarch was exiled) must have been designed to impress the public and soften its mood. It is hard to see how this could have been achieved without promoting them to higher positions than before.

[8]. ‘*Vestarches, krites of the velon and great kourator of the sekreton of the Mangana*’ (Wassiliou-Seibt: 1059-early years of the decade of 1060).²⁹ This is a major point of disagreement with Wassiliou-Seibt’s reconstruction. *Vestarches* is a considerable dignity—in Psellos’ world, in the early 1060s, it is shared by his protégé Anastasios Lizix and his ex-student Chasanes, both holding early offices in independent careers. It was that reached soon after by Psellos’ adoptive son-in-law.³⁰ It is what *Constantine might be expected to reach, in an administrative career in the capital under his uncle’s patronage up to 1057. But then he was promoted twice in a public way because of his uncle’s virtues more than his own. I cannot believe that *vestarches* was the dignity reached after the two actions of [3] and [6]. I have an impression that Wassiliou-Seibt has fitted *Constantine’s dignities and offices within a regular chronological template, to produce an average Byzantine career. But surely the point of these imperial gestures was to cause an unusual rise, showing exceptional imperial emotion over the uncle, reflected on the nephews in a striking way which all would recognize?

[10]. ‘*Magistros and sakellarios*’ (Wassiliou-Seibt: c.1065 [Psellos S 45, S 46]).³¹ I think this promotion was given in 1057, on grounds already stated.

²⁸ Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch) VII 65, 12–17, translated by E. R. A. Sewter, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: The Chronographia of Michael Psellus* (Harmondsworth, 1979), 315–16: ὁ δὲ ἐπειδήπερ ἡκηκόει, ἀθρόον πληγείς τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀνωλόλυξεν, οὐκ εἰθώς τοῦτο ποιεῖν· καὶ πολλὰ ἐκείνου ἀπωλοφύρετο· καὶ μετεγνώκει τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν πράξεως· ἐξιλιάσκετό τε πολλάκις τὴν ἐκείνου ψυχὴν· καὶ ὡςπερ ἀπολογούμενος· μᾶλλον δὲ ἐξευμενίζων, παρρησίαν τὴν εὐθὺς ἐδίδου τῷ ἐκείνου γένει· καὶ τοῖς τοῦ βήματος συνηρίθμει. Translated quotations from the *Chronographia* have been checked against *Michael Psellos, Leben der byzantinischen Kaisar (976–1075): Chronographia (Griechisch-deutsch)*. Eingeleitet, herausgegeben, übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen versehen von Diether Roderich Reinsch, in Zusammenarbeit mit Ljuba H. Reinsch-Werner (Berlin, 2015).

²⁹ βεστάρχης, κριτῆς τοῦ βήλου καὶ μέγας κουράτωρ τοῦ σεκρέτου τῶν Μαγγάνων. Wassiliou-Seibt, ‘Neffen’, 108, and plate 1.

³⁰ KD 202, S 25 (Lizix), S 39, S 172, S 189 (Chasanes), KD 268, S 157 (Psellos’ son-in-law).

³¹ μάγιστρος καὶ σακελλάριος. Wassiliou-Seibt, ‘Neffen’, 109.

There is a small additional reason for dating it then, beyond the need for promotion adequate to express imperial gratitude. The office of *sakellarios* is hard to pin down, as it varied between imperial and patriarchal spheres.³² Though the wording of Attaleiates is imprecise, this may be one of the promotions which Isaakios transferred to the patriarch to thank him for assistance (see [3]). If so, Keroularios may have wanted to emphasize his new privilege, by appointing his nephew as *sakellarios* with the dignity of *magistros*, two signs of the family's imperial favour.

[9, 11]. 'Proedros' (Wassiliou-Seibt: the end of the reign of Constantine X [1066–7] [Psellos KD 31]).³³ This letter shows *Constantine defending himself against a serious charge, over which Psellos fears he will lose him (probably through long exile). The text identifies Constantine X, his brother Ioannes, Eudokia, and a patriarch, as well as *Constantine's wife and children and brother Nikephoros, all deeply concerned over the trial as a major event. Psellos claims that all those named more or less accept *Constantine's innocence, while the *kensor* attacks him in a remorseless legal process. We should try to link this letter to known events before admitting defeat in establishing its context.

The biggest known crime in Constantine X's reign was an early conspiracy to capture the whole imperial family as they returned from a festival at the Mangana complex, and drown them in the Bosphoros. It was only foiled by good luck. We are told that the emperor discovered and punished the organizers. But this was not easy. The prefect of the city, for example, came to the palace pretending to have helped put down the revolt. However, he was later found to be implicated, so he was dismissed and exiled, with his property confiscated. Similar sentences were given to others.

A second revolutionary attempt so soon after the regime change from Isaakios to Constantine X suggests that the two be considered together. The first switched from an incipient Komnenos dynasty to the Doukai and the Keroularios faction (though dynastic implications were looser than later). It was supported by those enjoying unmerited privileges (especially the church), who resented Isaakios' determination to reduce non-military expenditure.³⁴ How opposition formed, who led it and how they drove Isaakios from office is largely unknown. Constantine X, the beneficiary, seems an unlikely revolutionary. The second movement, less than two years later, may have tried to reverse the first or adjust its results. Some minor conspirators appear elsewhere

³² J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les Offikia de l'Eglise Byzantine* (Paris, 1970), 310–14 and *passim*. The fragmentary evidence for the *sakellarios* at this time gives no basis to support or deny my assumption.

³³ *πρόεδρος*. Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 109.

³⁴ See Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VII 61–3, and Attaleiates, *History* (Kaldellis and Krallis), 12.3–4.

in Psellos.³⁵ Psellos also often lobbied emperors to recall exiles: in some cases the emperor may be Constantine X, and the punishments may result from this conspiracy.³⁶ But these scattered references do not form a movement, or reveal its aims. Modern historians do not know who led the plot or whom they planned to put on the throne. Was it a plan to restore the Komnenoi? No later historian of the family mentions it, and Isaakios' brother Ioannes had probably already refused the throne.³⁷ Had the supporters of Constantine X changed their minds, maybe realizing that he was obsessed with founding a Doukas dynasty? Attempted drowning of the entire Doukas family may suggest dynastic motives. *Constantine had truer claims to the Keroularios succession than the Doukai. Might he have joined one or both movements? Were there sufficient grounds for an investigator to ask him to defend himself? None of these questions have answers, and these important moments in the eleventh-century transformation of Byzantium remain annoyingly opaque. Still the murky background of the Mangana conspiracy gives scope for a situation where he could be implicated in a broad plot and tried despite enjoying the support of his cousin and her imperial husband, as described in KD 31. Research at this point might bring enlightening results.

[13] An important document from the end of the reign (1066–7) mentions *Constantine but says nothing about titles. The empress Eudokia, his cousin, pronounced a terrible public oath in solemn liturgical language, calling on earth, heaven, the Holy Trinity, the Panagia, the Cherubim, Seraphim, all the powers of heaven, all archangels and angels and martyrs and holy men. She proclaimed that if her husband Constantine X died, she would not remarry, nor favour her cousins over Constantine's brother Ioannes *kaisar*, nor otherwise work against her Doukai children born to Constantine X.³⁸ She promised her dying husband: "This too I guarantee to you, my lord and master, that for the whole term of my life I shall not bring to prominence one of my cousins or any other relation, as administrator of the state".³⁹ Her cousins, the only specific danger mentioned, were *Constantine and Nikephoros.

The whole Byzantine establishment were present; she asked the whole imperial family by name and the whole senate and synod to ensure that she kept her oath. The patriarch Xiphilinos swore to guard the document, see its terms

³⁵ E.g. Nikolaos *epi ton deeseon*, whose confiscated estates were given to Constantine X's supporter Epiphanius Philaretos. See G. T. Dennis (ed.), *Michael Psellus, Orationes forenses et acta* (Stuttgart; Leipzig, 1994), 169–75.

³⁶ See e.g. KD 48, KD 85, and S 97.

³⁷ Bryennios, *Historiae* (ed. Gautier), 81.7–83.11.

³⁸ N. Oikonomides, 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067): Un episode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance', *REB* 21 (1963), 101–28, here 107.

³⁹ "Ἐτι δὲ τοῦτο ἀσφαλιζομαι πρὸς σέ, τὸν αὐθέντην μου καὶ βασιλέα, ἵνα παρ' ὄλον τὸν τῆς ζωῆς μου χρόνον μὴ προσθήσομαι εἴτε ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξαδέλφων μου, εἴτε ἀπὸ τῶν ἐτέρων μου συγγενῶν τινα εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ τὸ διοικεῖν τὸ κοινόν.

were kept, and pass responsibility to a successor. The sanctions she called down on herself if she broke her word are terrifying: her body would be cut to pieces, burned, and thrown into the sea. She should be fully anathematized, losing all hope in the next world. She would strangle herself with her own hands before breaking the oath.⁴⁰

Constantine X fell ill in October 1066, appointed a regency, then took back imperial power. After fluctuating health he died on 21 May 1067, just after Eudokia's oath. This must reflect the emperor's deathbed anxieties, showing great mental distress in the family. Unfortunately for Constantine X, his dynastic plans were foiled by the androcentric nature of Byzantine society. Before the year was over a major military threat appeared in the east, and all demanded a soldier emperor, not a female regent, however efficient. Eudokia herself and Xiphilinos were probably among the first to agree. The oath was cancelled, and Eudokia married Romanos IV Diogenes.⁴¹

Constantine X died leaving a wife of child-bearing age and a blood relation of Keroularios. He feared a new dynastic family, like that which actually appeared, with Eudokia and Romanos' children. But he was just as worried over her cousins, Keroularios' nephews, nervous that she might let them threaten the throne by giving them the administrative role of Ioannes *kaisar*. This concern must have affected Constantine X throughout his long illness (1066–7), and probably before. Wassiliou-Seibt makes him give *Constantine two promotions in these years, to *magistros*, then *proedros*, which seems very unlikely. But what are the alternatives? If these promotions came before the accession of Constantine X, then *Constantine received them early, *magistros* at around twenty-one, and *proedros* at around twenty-three.⁴² But there are clear reasons why Isaakios might have given him spectacular promotions. On the other hand, promotions after 1060 would be more suitable to *Constantine's age. But whatever dignity he held in 1060, he had been promoted in both 1057 and 1059: why should he need further advancement at once? Yet by the middle of the reign the desperate oath of 1066 casts its shadow, suggesting that

⁴⁰ Oikonomides' edition puts this in the context of Byzantine oath-taking, with examples from Justinian to the fourteenth century. He finds this case extreme in the range of divine and human witnesses called, the severity of detailed punishments listed, and the fact that it was pronounced by a reigning empress. This is much more than a formula to emphasize a promise. The surviving form of the document is truncated, but its diplomatic style (supported by the report by Attaleiates, *History* (Kaldellis-Krallis), 16.12–13) suggests that it was not only signed by Eudokia and the patriarch, but by all earthly witnesses, including the whole synod and senate. To revoke the oath leave was needed from many of the witnesses: senators were lobbied individually by the patriarch (Zonaras [Bonn], III, 687; see Oikonomides, 'Le serment', 111–16).

⁴¹ Psellos, *Chronographia* VII 126–30 (B 5–B 9), and Attaleiates, *History* (Kaldellis-Krallis), 16.12–13.

⁴² These early promotions were not extreme. For example, *Constantine's own son Michael, also Psellos' pupil, could hardly have been born before 1050. But he was *vestarches* in 1069 (letter Sn 1) and may have been *proedros* in 1070 (Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 115).

the emperor might already have feared *Constantine too much to promote him. I think that both promotions were given by Isaakios, in 1057 and 1059.

For me, the major purpose of arguments over details of promotion which dominate this paper is to set parameters for discussing the changing dynamics of Byzantine political society and their impact on government, as sketched in [11]. The date of promotion to *proedros* is important. One promising approach to the puzzles of 1060–2 is the identification of *Constantine's trial of KD 31 as a result of the Mangana conspiracy. That is only possible if Isaakios had been forced by public expectations of penitence to promote *Constantine to *proedros* in 1059. I find the hypothesis worth researching; it should not be discarded just because men of *Constantine's age were not usually promoted so quickly.

∴

Psellos must have been dismayed by the rift between *Constantine and Constantine X. He had been very close to the emperor at the beginning of his reign (see the *Summaries*, excursus 6). Perhaps his friendship with *Constantine provides the context for two letters (G 1–2) showing estrangement from the emperor and his brother Ioannes. Writing to the latter, Psellos first defends himself against the charge of being bribed, then protests that Ioannes was encouraging him to be loyal to his imperial brother when he knew that Psellos was willing to die for him.

There survive some twenty letters of Psellos to the nephews, more to *Constantine than Nikephoros.⁴³ The distinction in the addresses between the two nephews is usually made by dignity and office, not forename, so there is scope to reattribute letters when changes occur in their *cursus honorum*, as happened recently. A Vienna seal (Mech. 26) was reassigned to Nikephoros as *γενικὸς λογοθέτης*, correcting an incomplete parallel seal published earlier which appeared to give that title to *Constantine.⁴⁴ As a result, two of Psellos' letters (S 117 and S 174), addressed to a *genikos*, were redirected from *Constantine to Nikephoros.

It is instructive to follow the range of interests over which Psellos wrote to the brothers. One letter to *Constantine as *sakellarios* discusses a splendid icon which he seems to own (maybe it was in the patriarchate?) (KD 211). The treatment is intellectual, challenging, and rather unexpected. Browning and

⁴³ A few uncertain cases have required subjective judgement. To *Constantine: G 21, KD 211–12, KD 214, S 1, S 45–6, S 83–6, S 157, S 184, S 186, Sn 1; to Nikephoros: KD 31, M 17–18, S 117, S 174.

⁴⁴ A.-K. Wassiliou and W. Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich, 2. Teil: Zentral- und Provinzialverwaltung* (Vienna, 2004), no. 54.

Cutler discuss it under the heading ‘A theoretical defence of icons’,⁴⁵ summing it up as follows: ‘The seductive power of the icon is such that it attracts mightily by virtue of its capacity to reproduce the prototype, but in this very success runs the risk of distracting us from that which is represented.’ A further letter (KD 212) is an introduction to Psellos’ extraordinary friend the monk Elias, though the same letter appears again in the same manuscript with another addressee, so that it may have been sent to one, the other, or both.⁴⁶ S 85, the connection of which to *Constantine is not certain, is a good example of a ‘literary’ letter playing with the idea of epistolography as an exchange between writer and recipient, valuing the letter on more conventional scales than that of literature. As his writing skills failed, Psellos tried ever harder to add literary value to his texts. *Constantine enjoyed the results, but what was Psellos’ reward? He concludes that his eloquence may be purchasing his correspondent’s power.⁴⁷ Psellos uses a letter congratulating *Constantine on a child of his second marriage to experiment with the gender of his first-person comments, as analysed by Stratis Papaioannou (S 157).⁴⁸ Though pleased the child is a boy, he would be just as happy with a girl. He makes his authorial gender a gradient, not an absolute. Though masculine in philosophical work, he is more feminine in dealing with babies. He describes in detail the bath routine of his adopted daughter’s children, and interaction with her female servants. A letter to Nikephoros (S 117) studies the science of babies and nipples as a metaphor to express reception in the literary process.

Mature letters like this suggest that the nephews were equals in the correspondence. S 184 is a useful corrective, showing *Constantine’s negative reception of an unconventional letter. A sequence of three letters may be outlined, with S 184 the last and the only survivor. It seems that Psellos had speculated about the reactions of Christ’s disciples if sent to a community of Scythian nomads. Sadly, little of the letter can be reconstructed. *Constantine replied in scandalized tones. In S 184, Psellos tried to heal the rift in a tone of hilarity, speaking of a dance which *Constantine was refusing to join. He claimed that this was a written form of the regular jokes they told when together, like Plato or Aristophanes.

⁴⁵ A. Cutler and R. Browning, ‘In the Margins of Byzantium? Some Icons in Michael Psellos’, *BMGS* 16 (1992), 22–4.

⁴⁶ G. Dennis, ‘Elias the Monk, Friend of Psellos’, in J. W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Byzantine Authors: Literary Activities and Preoccupations. Texts and Translations Dedicated to the Memory of Nikos Oikonomides* (Leiden; Boston, 2003), 43–62. The ms. situation is described by P. Moore, *Iter Psellianum* (Toronto, 2005), 62–3 (EP.192).

⁴⁷ The letter is probably addressed to *Constantine as *megas droungarios*, an office from which he may have had the authority to help his friend. The best of the letters in this category is well studied by F. Bernard, ‘Exchanging Logoi for Aloga: Cultural Capital and Material Capital in a Letter of Michael Psellos’, *BMGS* 35 (2011), 134–48.

⁴⁸ S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013), 192–231, esp. 195–200.

Nikephoros is shown in a less positive light. In S 174 he complained of not understanding a philosophical text of Psellos, who replied with a defence of difficult philosophy and its mysteries, into which he hoped one day to initiate Nikephoros. In M 17, Nikephoros is shown struggling to follow Psellos' discourse, making the latter pause and resume in a simpler register. Psellos hopes that the two brothers amuse themselves composing stories, and suggests (in a lacunose passage) a plot involving a nomad servant encouraged by his mistress, with eventual sexual content. As for the bizarre M 18, it is hard to imagine who delivered it to Nikephoros, and what transpired. The man was introduced as a doctor, specialized in treating animals and trees, but with a warning that his very touch was fatal to all categories of his patients.

A further letter (S 186) was sent to *Constantine from the Byzantine army under Romanos IV in Anatolia. We know that Psellos went on the second of Romanos' three campaigns as an expert in military tactics and siege warfare. He sent several letters on campaign which are well studied by Eva de Vries-van der Velden.⁴⁹ But his letter to *Constantine persuaded her that he also went on Romanos' third expedition. From several comments she deduced that Psellos followed the stronger half of the Byzantine army which besieged Chliat, leaving Romanos to lead the rest to defeat and capture at Mantzikert.⁵⁰ If true, this is very interesting. However, I feel that she does not make her case, and I date the letter to the second campaign. Psellos longs to be back home and to visit his friend and his family, giving details of their household, where Psellos' adoptive family seems to be looked after during his absence.

Three letters from Psellos to *Constantine (S 1, S 83, and S 84) concern the latter's second marriage, to which we shall now turn. We have met his first wife with more than one child, hoping that her husband would be acquitted in a major trial. She probably died in the late 1060s. In around 1074 he prepared to remarry, and naturally invited his friend Psellos. It is interesting to see the limitations Psellos felt in attending the ceremony, and how the two conspired to overcome his scruples (see pp. 57–8). He attended, and enjoyed it. He congratulated *Constantine on his bride, whom he called the most beautiful girl he had seen around the palace. Nikephoros was probably present, his last appearance (to my knowledge) in the historical record.⁵¹

Who was this bride, and why was she seen around the palace—not, surely, to be expected of an eligible but cocooned noble teenager? This question is answered some seventy years later by a great-grandson of the couple, Ioannes Tzetzes. Tzetzes' erudite letters met reactions of incomprehension from the

⁴⁹ E. de Vries-van der Velden, 'Psellos, Romain IV Diogénès et Mantzikert', *BSI* 58 (1997), 274–310.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 302–10.

⁵¹ The wording of S 84 expresses Psellos' closeness to the whole family; it suggests that Nikephoros was present, but that conclusion is not certain.

public, as his references were too obscure. He responded with more than 13,000 lines of obsessive verse, the *Chiliades*, to explain his own letters. In one letter he had claimed Georgian nationality, and the *Chiliades* gives details.⁵² The father of his grandmother was none other than *Constantine, and her mother was his second wife, whose marriage Psellos warily attended. She was a Georgian, who escorted Maria of Alania to Constantinople to marry Michael VII. Tzetzes, worried that readers might think she was a servant girl, stresses that she was a woman of standing; her children had the same high status as those of *Constantine's first wife.

If we remove Tzetzes' defensive perspective and examine the eleventh-century context, a different picture emerges. Georgians seem to have been the trophy brides of the 1070s. At least three married into the upper echelons of Byzantine society, Maria of Alania herself and two of her ladies. Details were worked out by J.-F. Vannier.⁵³ Maria married the emperor Michael VII, head of the Doukas clan. Eirene of Alania married Isaakios Komnenos, head of the Komnenians, who merged with the Doukai to govern Byzantium for a century. (Alexios, the eventual Komnenos emperor, was still a teenager.) And then there was *Constantine's anonymous bride. How would he describe his own dynastic position?

This is the context in which to approach the only reference to *Constantine in the 1070s in a narrative history. In the second half of the decade Michael VII and his minister Nikephoritzes decided to support their authority by appointing as *kaisar* one of several powerful, ambitious generals who threatened rebellion. They chose Nikephoros Bryennios, and began to ask whether he was acceptable to others. Bryennios' descendant, the historian who shared his name, says that *Constantine was one of those consulted. His view on Bryennios was positive, but he was annoyed at the question, because (he said) he had long coveted the position for himself.⁵⁴

The next text is a strange chrysobull written by Psellos around the time of *Constantine's wedding. Most of the letters show similar competition between private greed and legal and religious idealism as motives for action. But we now pass to an official document, where we may expect more engagement with the realities of imperial finance and administration.⁵⁵ The subject is a seaside estate, Kalai, belonging to *Constantine. The chrysobull narrates two

⁵² The original letter is in *Ioannes Tzetzes, Epistulae*, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), 10.3–6 (no. 6); Tzetzes' verse comments are found at: *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Naples, 1968), lines V 585–630; the whole situation is analysed by P. Gautier, 'La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzetzes', *REB* 28 (1970), 207–20.

⁵³ J.-F. Vannier, 'Notes généalogiques byzantino-géorgiennes', in *EYΨΥΧΙΑ: Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler* (Byzantina Sorbonensia 16), 2 vols (Paris, 1998), 673–83.

⁵⁴ Bryennios, *Historiae* (ed. Gautier), 211.6–213.11.

⁵⁵ 'Χρυσόβουλλος λόγος τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ βασιλέως' (Actum 2), in *Michael Psellus, Orationes forenses et acta*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1994), 155–9.

episodes some two years apart. In the first, Michael VII felt a desire for Kalai, not (it is stressed) out of envy for its charms, but for another purpose. He offered *Constantine an exchange, two even better inland estates made into one. The chrysobull speaks of a stream of imperial generosity which did not diminish its eternal fount. We begin to feel a sense of unreality.

A couple of years later, Michael VII realized that *Constantine wanted Kalai back. He decided to satisfy the lover with the desired object, without recovering the other estates or altering the chrysobull. But Michael had also spent more than 150 *litrai* to enlarge Kalai and its buildings. *Constantine blushed at receiving such a gift. He insisted that Michael accept some recompense, not as the price of the estate, but as an unseen, sacred contribution to make it holy ground.⁵⁶ Unreality has completely taken over. Michael finally was persuaded to accept 120 *litrai*. The rest of the chrysobull declares that *Constantine and his heirs should have undisputed ownership of Kalai, whatever the nature of the transaction—a sale, or a perfect meeting of imperial generosity with the gratitude of an embarrassed subject. I can only guess at a reason for the text's tone, especially as Michael VII's nickname, Parapinakes, referred to his legendary meanness over the price of bread. Might this be a joke between Psellos and *Constantine at the expense of Michael VII, who would sign without reading it? Or is it an insight into Michael's worldview, showing he was inadequate and out of touch?

∴

It is time to return to *Constantine's *cursus honorum*. As before, the discussion is intended to be self-contained, but with numerical references back to Table 4.1, for the benefit of those who wish to consult the broader picture.

[14–16]. I believe that *Constantine ended the reign of Constantine X as *proedros*, as he had begun it (see pp. 71–4). Before 1072 he was promoted to *protoproedros*, a rank he held until the middle of the decade, in fact probably till 1078. The *terminus ante quem* of 1072 is given by a letter of Psellos (Wassiliou-Seibt: 1072 [Psellos S 184]), addressing him as *protoproedros*, with a light-hearted reference to the empress Eudokia, who was confined to a monastery later in that year by her son, Michael VII. The date of *Constantine's promotion to a higher rank will be discussed in items [19–23]. The first office he held as *protoproedros* was probably *logothetes of the herds*.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ [...] ἵν' ἔχοι τὸ προσφερόμενον οὐ τιμὴν κτήματος, ἀλλὰ τιμὴν ἐντάφιον ἢ αἰδίων καὶ συνεισφορὰν πρὸς ἅγιον καὶ θεοπρεπῆς τέμενος (lines 93–5).

⁵⁷ πρωτοπρόεδρος καὶ μέγας λογοθέτης τῶν ἀγελῶν. Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 110, and plate 3.

[17–18]. There are a number of references linking *Constantine with offices including the word *droungarios*, preceded by *megas* or followed by *of the vigla*. It is hard to trace promotion through these offices, since neither of the additional elements, *megas* or *of the vigla*, seems to be accurately recorded in literary sources. There is even the possibility of a change in nomenclature exactly at this time.⁵⁸ His next office was that of *epi ton kriseon*, with which, as we shall see, he died. The change occurred between 1074 and 1078.⁵⁹

[19] The narrative histories of Attaleiates and Nikephoros Bryennios give graphic accounts of the arrival in Constantinople of Nikephoros III Botaneiates in spring 1078, emphasizing a dramatic change in the climate of state finances. Bryennios' account is brief and to the point:

There were two means by which the Roman empire was proud to channel rewards to its eminent citizens and those who served it well, and he threw them both wide open and allowed everybody to draw generously from them. In fact, the highest titles were not awarded to outstanding citizens, military men and descendants of senators, nor to those who showed a degree of loyalty, but to anyone who asked for them. The same happened to what the Romans call 'offices', with the result that expenditure came to be many times greater than revenues, and for that reason money soon ran out, the coinage was debased, and the pay from the emperor attached to dignities and offices was suspended because of the lack of money.⁶⁰

Bryennios is probably summarizing a passage in Attaleiates which is too long and repetitive to be quoted in full.⁶¹ Attaleiates was a firm supporter of Botaneiates, so the passage was an encomium of the new emperor. His *History* was dedicated to Botaneiates, and put in the public domain before the latter's deposition (1081). Thus it would have been first read within three years of the

⁵⁸ πρωτοπρόεδρος καὶ μέγας δρουγγάριος τῆς βίγλας. Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 110, and plate 4. *Constantine is attested with these titles in a legal document (*hypomnestikon*) for Michael VII, dated 1074. His application to the emperor over the legislation is signed with one *droungarios*-title, whereas the law itself uses another: see K. E. Zachariä von Lingenthal, *Jus graecoromanum* (Athens, 1931), vol. I, 280–1. He is also given a title including *droungarios* in Psellos' letters M 17 and M 18, and letters concerning *Constantine's second marriage (S 1, S 83, S 84). The *hypomnestikon* is the latest dated occurrence of this title (1074).

⁵⁹ There is no dated reference to *Constantine as *epi ton kriseon* before 1078 (see items [20] and [23]).

⁶⁰ Bryennios, *Historiae* (ed. Gautier), IV, 1: Δυσὸν γὰρ ὄντων πόροιιν ἐξ ὧν ἡ βασιλεία Ῥωμαίων τὰ μέγιστα ἐσμενύνετο ὀχρητηγούσα τὰ γέρα τοῖς ἀριστεύουσι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλως εὖνοιαν συνεισφέρουσι, ἄμφω τούτους ἀναστομώσας τοῖς πᾶσι προῖκα ἐκέλευεν ἀρδεύεσθαι δαφυλῶς ἐχορήγησε· τῶν τε γὰρ ἀξιωματῶν τὰ μέγιστα οὐκ ἀριστεύει καὶ στρατιώταις καὶ τοῖς ἐκ τῆς συγκλήτου βουλῆς καταγομένοις πεφιλοτίμητο οὐδὲ τοῖς εὖνοιάν τινα συνεισφέρουσιν, ἀλλὰ παντὶ τῷ αἰτούντι· ταῦτό δὲ καὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις ὀφφικίοις ἐτελοῦτο, ὥστε ξυμβῆναι πολλαπλασίους τὰς ἐξόδους τῆς εἰσόδου γενέσθαι κακὰ τῆς τοιαύτης αἰτίας μετὰ βραχύν τινα χρόνον τῶν χρημάτων ἐκλειοπύτων τό τε νόμισμα κεικιδήλευτο λοιπὸν καὶ αἱ τοῖς ἀξιώμασι καὶ τοῖς ὀφφικίοις ἐκ βασιλείως ἀνήκουσαι δωρεαὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν χρημάτων σπάνιν ὑπεκρούοντο.

⁶¹ Attaleiates, *History* (Kaldellis-Krallis), 33.2.

events described. The scene is Constantinople and much of the action takes place in public; the senatorial elite are among the chief actors, and they would have made up a good proportion of the readers. This narrative is for immediate consumption by interested eyewitnesses. The rhetorical decoding essential for much Byzantine historical literature is less necessary here than for events occurring long ago on a distant frontier.

Attaleiates stresses twice the universal public amazement that the parsimony of the last years of Michael VII and Nikephoritzes suddenly changed to bounteous plenty under Botaneiates. He also says twice that the criterion for promotion was largely the fact that somebody requested it: no application was refused. As well as dignities and offices, the grants included money, land, and tax exemptions. There is special concentration on a ceremony on Palm Sunday, when all the senatorial class were promoted, some by four or five grades. The official announcing promotions was exhausted and lost his voice. The collapse of the whole honours system is implied, but not stated so baldly as in Bryennios.

These passages suggest that, at the accession of Botaneiates, it might be safer to assume that a given person was promoted, unless there is evidence to the contrary. In the case of *Constantine, the evidence is all for promotion. At a date between 1074–8 he rose from *protoproedros* [10] to *sebastos* [11], a large promotion, in one or more stages. It would surely be unwise to suggest, without evidence, that the whole increase occurred before Botaneiates arrived. This thought already suggests that the final promotion to *sebastos*, at least, occurred in 1078.

[20]. Psellos' letter G 21 is addressed to a *protoproedros* and *epi ton kriseon*.⁶² *Constantine held both dignity and office at some time between 1074–8, probably simultaneously. There were many *protoproedroi*, but only one *epi ton kriseon* at a time, so the odds that he was addressee are favourable. *Constantine also received more letters from Psellos in the 1070s than anybody else, shortening the odds still further. He, like the recipient of the letter, was a very close friend. But since I have been told that my identification of *Constantine as recipient of the letter⁶³ was too hasty, I shall rehearse the arguments again.

The letter describes a rather amusing scene. Psellos announced to a friend and colleague that he had just been promoted. His friend broke the rules of friendship by a display of jealousy, but soon corrected his mistake. Psellos' letter forgave him for his slip, dramatizing it by comparing it to Atlas stumbling under the weight of the heavens. The letter's subject is equality and inequality. We learn a good deal about the way this promotion affected

⁶² Εἰς τὸν πρωτοπρόεδρον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κρίσεων, φίλτατον μὲν αὐτῷ τυγχάνοντα, βραχὺ δέ τι παραβασκῆναντα. For a full English translation of this letter, see the Appendix to this chapter.

⁶³ Jeffreys, 'Psellos in 1078', 86–8.

relations between the two friends. Some inequality is God-given, as between the sun and moon, and cannot be remedied. Other forms of inequality are constructed in other ways, and over those we have some control. It is plain that Psellos' promotion has affected the equality between the friends: either they were unequal, and have become equal, or the reverse. The only easy measure of equality between officials is their dignity, their noble title. The key is in the dignity of *protoproedros* in the address: Psellos either was promoted up *from* that dignity, or up *to* it.

The choice is not difficult. Perhaps the most important sentence is *Σοὶ δ' ἂν καὶ συγγνώμην εἰκότα παθόντι καὶ κατόπιον ἐμοῦ γεγονότι, τὰ πρῶτα συντρέχοντι καὶ ἴσως προδραμόντι βραχὺ* ('I should pardon you for a natural reaction when you found yourself behind me, having first run at my side and even perhaps slightly in front'). Psellos also blamed his promotion in part for his friend's slip, referring to himself in the words *ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς γεγονότες* ('rising above your head'). These and other phrases in the letter show that the promotion broke a period of equality between the two. If we apply this to *Constantine, he had been *protoproedros* since item [14], in 1071–2. Psellos reached that dignity around the same time, for the same letter (S 184) is probably the first indication for both of them that they had reached that dignity.⁶⁴ Thus they had been 'running side by side' for some years. As for the moment when *Constantine was ahead of Psellos, he may have been the first to be appointed *protoproedros*, or maybe even earlier, e.g. at promotion to *vestarches*. In the absence of a name in the address for letter G 21, it will always be impossible to state definitively that it was sent to *Constantine: but the identification is more secure than many which have been accepted for Psellos' letters. Irrespective of the recipient of the letter, it claims that Psellos was promoted. Unless we are willing to connect it with his appointment as *protoproedros* back at the beginning of the decade of the 1070s, this is the only surviving evidence that he rose above that dignity—maybe to *kouropalates*, or even higher. Does the absence of other references to his promotion arouse suspicions? When did the promotion take place?

[21–4]. To answer questions like this, we must go over ground already covered in another paper.⁶⁵ The first question is the date of the letter KD 214 (item [23]).⁶⁶ I will briefly summarize the arguments. The letter shows Psellos as lonely in the capital, consoled by the presence of an empress—not Maria of Alania, the reigning empress, for he has no access to the court and no connection to her. It must be Eudokia, who returned to the capital in the

⁶⁴ Stratis Papaioannou informs me that I was wrong to claim that Psellos' letter S 184 was written as *protoproedros* to *Constantine as *proedros*. Moore, *Iter Psellianum*, 77, prints *προέδρω*, Sathas (ad loc.) *πρωτοπροέδρω*. Par. gr. 1182 agrees with the latter reading.

⁶⁵ Jeffreys, 'Psellos in 1078', 82–5.

⁶⁶ See the translation in the Appendix to this chapter.

spring of 1078. Equally, references in the letter make it hard to reduce the number of children of *Constantine's second marriage below four or at the fewest three, probably with time for another birth since Psellos had heard news. As the marriage is dated c.1072–3, the letter was not written before 1077–8. Other less direct arguments in the article confirm this date.

Now we should return to letter G 21. This must be dated before KD 214, that is before spring 1078, because *Constantine's dignity in G 21 is *proto-proedros* whereas in KD 214 it is *sebastos*. But how long before? *Constantine's office in G 21 is *epi ton kriseon*, so the letter must be dated after his appointment to that office, which occurred in 1074 or later (see [18]). As we saw at the end of [20], Psellos' promotion above the dignity of *protoproedros* is not referred to in any other source. This fact tends to push the date later. It is surely easier to accept the silence of other narrative sources, and of Psellos himself in his letters and rhetorical works, if he enjoyed his new dignity for a brief time, rather than the maximum of three or four years which would result from the earliest possible promotion (in 1074). The most attractive answer to the question would be promotion at the beginning of 1078, just before the date of KD 214. This would make it a part of the massive promotions mentioned by Attaleiates and Bryennios for the first weeks of Bryennios' reign (see [19]). It could have passed unnoticed at a moment when everybody was being promoted, or perhaps it was solemnly promised to him without ever being put into practice. No source explicitly mentions Psellos' death: if this occurred later in the spring of 1078 (which seems now to be the majority view), we should not be surprised that a brief promotion just before death remains just as obscure. I suggest that if (as concluded earlier) Psellos was promoted either in the last years of Michael VII or in spring 1078, the first weeks of Botaneiates' reign, the latter is much the more likely. As Botaneiates brought the empress Eudokia back to the capital after exile, he granted substantial and almost universal rises in dignity. I think that Psellos made an early and successful application, leading to the incident recorded in G 21.

There is another issue that would be a problem in any Byzantine year but 1078. Psellos died within a few months of the promotion of G 21, when he addressed *Constantine as *protoproedros*. Before death, he wrote to him again (KD 214) as *sebastos*. Thus in spring 1078 *Constantine's dignity jumped some four levels, in the multiple grades of the 1070s. But Attaleiates tells us that there really were promotions of four levels at the date we have already established for KD 214. Perhaps he even had *Constantine in mind. All criteria seem to fit well.

One further speculation suggests itself. Attaleiates and Bryennios in [19] (the latter perhaps copying the former) both state that Botaneiates gave promotions to all those who asked for them. Let us take the historians at their word. Who might have asked for a promotion to *sebastos* for *Constantine? Who might at

this stage have regarded this as a point to be aimed at in the promotion system for Byzantines, where it had not been used before? Werner Seibt has shown that there had been one clear promotion to that level a decade before in Georgia (King Bagrat IV), and another (Giorgi II) followed it around 1078, the time we are discussing.⁶⁷ Botaneiates and *Constantine both had Georgian wives, who came to Constantinople together, the empress doubtless with Georgian advisers. Might not this Georgian connection be the source of a request leading to *Constantine's unexpected promotion to *sebastos*?

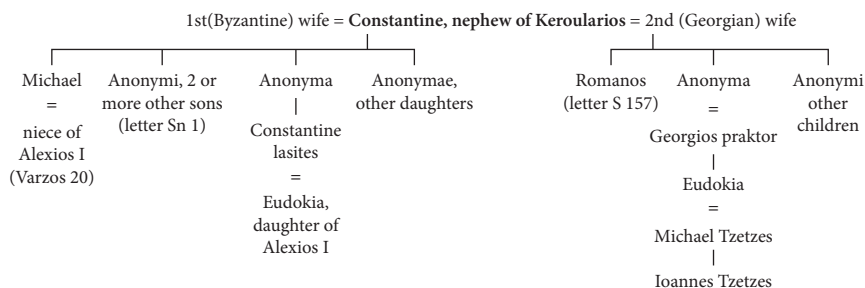


Figure 4.2. Constantine's descendants

In the first family, Michael was probably the eldest son, but the sequence of children is otherwise conjectural (Figure 4.2). In the second, S 157 suggests that Romanos was probably the eldest child, and Tzetzes' grandmother will have followed soon after, since she was old enough to be adopted and married off by the ex-empress Eudokia, who probably did not long survive the accession of Alexios I in 1081. This table is based on Gautier 'Ascendance' 220, updated and refocused from Tzetzes to *Constantine.

∴

This chapter will conclude with a brief section on *Constantine's progeny. Michael (named after *Constantine's surrogate father), his most prominent child, married a niece of Alexios I, probably Anna Taronitissa, daughter of Alexios' elder sister Maria.⁶⁸ He thus became one of Alexios' closest circle, the *gambroi*.⁶⁹ Varzos dates the wedding to 1078–9. He was certainly married by

⁶⁷ W. Seibt, 'Der byzantinische Rangtitel Sebastos in vorkommenischer Zeit', *TM* 16 (2010), 761–2.

⁶⁸ For Michael, see Gautier, 'Ascendance', 216–17; K. Varzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, 2 vols (Thessaloniki, 1984), vol. 1, 124 (no. 20).

⁶⁹ For the term, see L. Stiernon, 'Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: Sébaste et gambros', *REB* 23 (1965), 222–43.

1081, when he was one of those who ensured that the deposed Nikephoros III was tonsured as a monk.⁷⁰ It was presumably Alexios' mother Anna Dalassene who arranged the marriage, just as she chose around that time a grandson of Nikephoros III for Anna Komnene, daughter of Alexios' deceased elder brother Manuel.⁷¹ Anna, who expertly wove the Byzantine aristocracy into the Komnenian dynasty, thus testifies to the importance of *Constantine and his son in the Byzantium of the 1070s, for she would not have chosen Michael if he did not add significant benefit. He was to become famous as the *logothetes ton sekreton* from at least 1094 throughout Alexios' reign, a kind of head of the imperial civil service. He followed his father in not using a family name, and picturing St Menas Kallikelados on his seals.⁷²

As we have seen, Psellos wrote letter Sn 1, probably in 1069, to *Constantine from central Asia Minor, on campaign with the emperor. He was dreaming of his friend's delightful home and family, to which he hoped to return soon. He remembered *Constantine's first wife and three young males who must be their sons, listed by their titles: the *vestarches* (Psellos' pupil, probably Michael), the *vestes*, and the *patrikios* (who was little more than a baby). There was also at least one daughter, a distinguished woman who became the wife of Iasites.⁷³ Tzetzes, to stress the status of his grandmother, born into *Constantine's second family, claimed that she was honoured as much as Iasites' wife from the first. Iasites and his wife had at least one son, the Constantine Iasites who made another marriage into the imperial family in the next generation. He wed Alexios I's daughter Eudokia; however, the marriage failed, as the bride's mother, Eirene Doukaina, judged that the husband showed insufficient respect for his high-born wife. She chased him out of the palace, and sent her daughter to a convent.

A child of *Constantine's second family appears in Psellos' letter S 157, which congratulates the father on his birth. The letter's heading calls him Romanos, probably the eldest. All the children make an allusive appearance in KD 214, where I count at least three or four.⁷⁴ Two seem to be boys (one presumably Romanos). But we have most information about the anonymous girl who was Tzetzes' grandmother.⁷⁵ She was adopted by the ex-empress Eudokia because her father *Constantine had died, and Eudokia stepped in to preside over her wedding. The girl married Georgios the *exaktor*, a prominent tax-collector.

⁷⁰ Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, ed. Reinsch-Kambylis (Berlin; New York, 2001), 65.13–15.

⁷¹ Varzos, vol. 1, 122: no. 19.

⁷² Wassiliou-Seibt, 'Neffen', 115–16 and plates 9, 10, and 10a shows his seals, first in a provincial office, then as *sebastos* shortly after his father's death (a title now based on his close relationship to the emperor). His iconography and distinctive patron saint were clearly modelled on his father's seals.

⁷³ Gautier, 'Ascendance', 217–18.

⁷⁴ Jeffreys, 'Psellos in 1078', 85.

⁷⁵ Gautier, 'Ascendance', 218–19.

They had three daughters, one named Eudokia (presumably the eldest, named after her adoptive grandmother). This was Ioannes Tzetzes' mother.

∴

This nameless branch of the Keroularioi played a muted but significant role in Byzantium after the death of the patriarch Michael. *Constantine admitted to dreams of becoming *kaisar*, and married a wife with imperial connotations. As a legal bureaucrat in an era of warlords, he was briefly promoted higher than anyone else. His eldest son joined the Komnenian dynasty, and his grandson Constantine Iasites married an imperial daughter. But despite his frequent appearance in the writings of Psellos, *Constantine's prominence remains an enigma.

He and his son must have been very competent bureaucrats, and perhaps their skills were prized in a world dominated by soldiers. There is also their Georgian dimension. But one looks for something more. It is likely that some of the aura of the patriarch Michael still clung to him, the faction of St Michael, emphasized by keeping his uncle as part of his usual name. Perhaps, for example, he still preserved some of the popularity in the capital which two decades earlier prevented Isaakios I from putting the patriarch on trial in the city, and forced him to use a kangaroo court in Thrace.

APPENDIX: KD 214 AND G 21

The Greek text from which these translations have been made is a provisional form of the new edition by Stratis Papaioannou, kindly supplied by the editor in advance of publication. The translations below have been much improved after careful examination by Diether Reinsch.

KD 214 To the *epi ton kriseon* and *sebastos*, nephew of the patriarch kyr Michael

These things, my lord and nephew, are a recompense for the unpleasant events which have happened to me up to now; they have brought down the opposite pan for me, as if on a balance. For a fish of this quality and size is a perfect gift, coming down from on high (or rather sent by your hand, which is dearest to me). I have even forgotten whether there exists such a kind of fresh-water species. That is the state I have reached through living in the capital. But now suddenly I receive Platonic memories, and I remember that many such fish were also presented to me by your uncle, the great patriarch. You, who have inherited and succeeded to all his possessions, have become the heir, not only of his spiritual character, but of his generosity too.

I don't know whether I dwell in plenty and luxury, being commanded to inhabit the queen of cities, or you are in a better state, free from jealousy, living somewhere far from town. If the very best of the advantages here is our empress and lady, as indeed she is and is so called, by your saintly soul, for this reason it is we who have the upper hand, for it is not as though we only glimpse the sun as if through a smoke-vent. But if we enjoy here the delights of spring, I do not think that this is the preserve of the city. There may be nightingales and swallows where you are, too, perhaps even more numerous and more melodious. If we are closer to the tree of life, and for that reason you tilt the balance of prosperity in our favour, I would tell you the story that when Adam disobeyed the commandment, God settled him opposite the Garden, not that he should be consoled by its closeness, but that on the contrary he should be annoyed and infuriated. Later, reducing the race's punishment, he moved them much further away. I am so much more annoyed than you are, that though I live in the neighbourhood of the Garden, I am instructed not to go closer or to pick any of its fruits.

God, in forethought for Adam, progenitor of our race, made woman out of his rib, so that he could have pleasure even in exile. This is how the Lord made your nearest and dearest, and now in a strange land there is a well-populated and rich house, the new Jacob himself and the mother of Benjamin and of Joseph too and of your other beloved sons and fine daughters; there are many good servant women, those who were free, those purchased for cash, the solemn old ladies, my favourite Charistikarea, perhaps another addition, male or female,⁷⁶ the males singing, the females replying antiphonally, making your stay in exile brighter. But I, in contrast to all this, lost my rib to no purpose. I had no chance to get pleasure from the operation. Of my nearest and dearest I know where in the world one was buried, while the other, no less buried, I have all but forgotten. As for the rest of the group that surrounded me, I do not know whether they are alive or whether I should grieve and speak of them as dead.

You not only enjoy these advantages, but you also have the rest of good things in abundance. Living as you do on the boundary of land and sea, you will, if you wish, mow grass and hunt fish at the same spot. At one moment you have by you the delightful sand of the shore, then the flowers of the earth, for a time the pimpernels, then beds of lilies and roses; how lovely it is by day to hear the buzzing of the bees, then the song of the cicadas, and at night the shepherd's pipe. What a delight is the sea, the swell breaking gently and, as it were, playing around the headlands and foaming at your feet, approaching them by a silent wave. What an event is a fish quivering at the

⁷⁶ This untidy list will have been clear for Psellos and for *Constantine and his household, but it is very confusing for us. It begins with *Constantine (Jacob), and two sons (Benjamin and Joseph) of his second wife, who is thus a Rachel. She (a Georgian) is the foreigner who somehow places the house in a strange land, though it is probably Kalai, just outside Constantinople. More sons and daughters are added, both in the plural, some maybe children of his first marriage. We know from elsewhere that his second wife had at least one daughter, Ioannes Tzetzes' grandmother. The list then adds servants, apparently all female. With Charistikarea (owner of a monastery, relative of an owner, or an ironic nickname?), we may leave the servile category. The last item may belong to any of the groups mentioned: I would like to think that it represents one more hypothetical child of *Constantine's. It is interesting to calculate how many children have been produced by the second marriage (since c.1071–2). There must be at least two sons and one daughter, and probably at least one more child. Equally, the last phrase may mean that Psellos has had no recent news, and wishes to allow for yet another child just born. With 3 + 1 children, even more with 4 + 1, the letter can hardly have been written much before spring, 1078, when I wish to date it.

end of a fishing-rod, leaping high and trying to break the line. What a joy are lambs hanging from their mothers' udders, and goats trotting on the tips of their hooves, barely touching the sloping rocks and reaching the mountains, and sheep calmly frolicking and enjoying each other's company. If the names of things cause a kind of musical echo in your hearing, how great is the delight derived from the objects linked to those names, the *ménage* of family members, the joy of the countryside, the songs of the birds, the colours of the blossoms, the meadows full of flowers, the smooth, heaving sea, and the rest, which I can list in words, but you enjoy, some by sight, some by hearing, and others by taste.

G 21 To the *protoproedros* and *epi ton kriseon*, who was very dear to me, but had acted in a rather jealous way

So far from blaming you for your slip, I admire you for the swift way you corrected it.⁷⁷ It seemed that you had not even made the mistake, even after suffering a human reaction towards us. For your regular condition is a mark of the most perfect state of mind, while the way you infringed was merely temporary. Just as Atlas when he was carrying that enormous weight on his forehead—I mean the heavens—could not avoid stumbling slightly on his feet, so of necessity even your noble soul had to depart briefly from the duties of *philia*. Even we—we must tell the truth—added to your burden by rising above your head. This was the reason you could not carry the burden and briefly lost your balance.

So I blame myself for my upward step just as much as you for your false step. But just as you are completely pardoned because what you did was temporary, so I am absolved, for the same reason, of the accusation over inequality. Do you not see that I am not healing you so much as myself? I should pardon you for a natural reaction when you found yourself behind me, having first run at my side and even perhaps slightly in front. But it is not possible for you to pass on to me the quality of inferiority, nor for me to give you, my friend, that of superiority. Those who live under the same parallel live also under the same sun, but for us it is not possible to share the same rank. Even if most of us share the same name, we cannot share equality in other respects. Those who have different titles will no less be divided into different ranks.

Perhaps you did not grudge me my promotion, but envied it, or refused to accept the additional differentiation. Hence the blame implied in your remark. Perhaps I was the victim of some emotion, for ambition does take root even in philosophical minds, just as with avarice it is quite the opposite. But I did not think that this would cause you offence, just as the sun, though it is set in a higher sphere, would not suppose that the moon would begrudge this: the sun is so far above the moon that it is a greater distance from the moon to the sun than the moon's distance from the earth. It would say to the moon, if it spoke grudgingly, 'My dear moon, why say nothing before, but start now? Why are you begrudging the fact that I have a bigger circle than yours, illuminated at every point and assigned lordship over the day? While my light is very pure and radiant, yours is rather dark when it is not from me, and all its partial brightness comes to you from my rays. You should have always yielded me the primacy, as it was thus ordained by God. You are at the boundary between stable reality and creation, and are

⁷⁷ This is almost certainly *Constantine, nephew of Michael Keroularios. See pp. 80–1.

the last body in heaven, while as for me, I stand in the very centre of pure nature, bestowing my own light equally both on those above and on you below'. This is what the sun would have said, if it saw the moon was annoyed at its high position. I will let others speak like this, but I will say to you what I always have said, that I do not leave you behind when I rise up, nor when I go down do I see you as rising.

Let the connections between us remain as they naturally are. But as for me, if I rise in heaven, I will picture you there, or if I am under creation, I will not even so be separated from you, even if you yourself rise high. Where issues of choice prevail, I have truly entered the same pan of the balance as you; where temporary issues are in force, while external circumstances for us may be different, our delightful spiritual situation remains unchanged. Do we need verbal communication and greeting between us? I shall concede to you the right to speak first, and admire your acuteness. Is there a contest involving intelligence and prudence? I will yield you my superiority, as someone else will call it. I am not going to compete with you, either in verbal ability, or in any other skill. And if you do not fully succeed in the goal you have set yourself, I will either direct you towards it or suggest something new. I will rather deviate together with you than move directly ahead on a straight line.

Why should I not say more? Perhaps you were not born to wrestle nor to run in the arena, nor even to drive a chariot as well as Antilochos. But if any question arises about this, I will prove you to be a boxer, runner and charioteer (I speak figuratively), or in reality a rhetorician and a practitioner of any kind of philosophy you wish, and with other knowledge, particularly about geography. As for me, in appearance I have no knowledge of any of these skills, but in reality I have a precise command of all of them. No Italian will find fault with me over legal issues, and no Ancient Greek about philosophy itself, not even if somebody babbles away eloquently, producing rounded little speeches, speaking and logic-chopping better than me. I say this comparing myself to those currently alive, against whom you would vote yourself, if you were set to judge between me and them.

Come here then, my dearest and noble friend, and seat yourself on the same thrones I occupy, if you wish, or if you do not, on others higher still. I will never, never distinguish in you right or left (as the prophet said), but I will believe the best place to be is wherever you position yourself. If you have the same feelings about me and reciprocate in the same way, so that *philia* should not prove lame, we will, in the language of music, achieve equality out of inequality.

The Intertwined Lives of Michael Psellos and John Mauropous

Marc D. Lauxtermann

Even among the best of friends arguments and disputes are wont to happen, and Michael Psellos and John Mauropous were no exception.¹ They were typical Byzantine intellectuals with a quite untypically strong belief in, and sincere love for, Greek letters and philosophy. Mauropous implored God almighty to save Plato and Plutarch from eternal damnation,² Psellos defended Plato against his enemies.³ Both were members of a literary in-crowd that communicated with each other in a language contemporaries must have found difficult to understand and which posterity finds equally difficult to understand, but also annoyingly vague and irritatingly highbrow. They were both involved in public affairs. Psellos may have exaggerated his own importance in his various writings, but there is no denying that he frequented the houses of the high and mighty and lobbied in the corridors of the Great Palace from Monomachos till Botaneiates. Mauropous was the spokesman of the Monomachos regime in 1047 and, appointed against his will to the see of Euchaita, steered this town through difficult times until c.1075. The point where they parted ways was their different views on public office: whereas Psellos thought that the true philosopher should put his ideas into action,⁴

¹ For Michael Psellos, see J. N. Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 2004). For John Mauropous, see A. Karpozilos, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου και του έργου του Ιωάννη Μαυρόποδος* (Ioannina, 1982).

² *Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitanae quae in codice vaticano graeco 676 supersunt*. Iohannes Bollig descripsit, Paulus de Lagarde edidit (Göttingen, 1882), poem no. 43.

³ His letter to Xiphilinos (C 1), with its famous quote: 'Plato is mine', would seem to be evidence enough, but see K. Metzler, 'Pagane Bildung im christlichen Byzanz: Basileios von Kaisareia, Michael Psellos und Theodoros Metochites', in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (Berlin; New York, 2007), 287–303, at 293–5, who suggests that we should put a question mark at the end of the sentence: 'Is Plato mine (as you aver)?'

⁴ See A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007), 191–224, esp. 213–14.

Mauropous preferred to stay aloof. His motto was: *λάθε βιώσας*, 'live unnoticed'.⁵ Contemplative by nature, he thought that entering the political fray meant compromising one's ideals. Psellos, on the other hand, must have felt this was a betrayal of Platonism: what Plato had been to Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily, he and his friends would be to Monomachos and others.⁶

This is, of course, a schematic reduction of an infinitely more interesting human reality, the various ways in which lives may intertwine, unravel, disintegrate into loosely connected threads, and reconfigure into new patterns adding richness and texture to it all, while depleting it of any form of meaningfulness. However, the simplification of a much more complex reality is perhaps unavoidable in the case of Byzantine epistolography, our main source for reconstructing the vicissitudes of friendships and relationships in Byzantium. As demonstrated by Stratis Papaioannou with force and clarity, what Michael Psellos strove after in his letters was the construction of a rhetorical self—an idealized self-portrait that is true both in rhetorical and philosophical terms, while perhaps untrue in as much as the 'real' self (whatever that may be) remains hidden.⁷ The same can be said for the letters of John Mauropous—these, too, act out a certain script and enact a certain dramatic tension between real facts and real fiction.

The lives of Psellos and Mauropous are so intertwined that scholars may be forgiven for thinking that clashing perspectives should necessarily also represent clashing realities. Of course, there is always, to a certain extent, an overlap between the self and the representation of self, but the self itself is beyond experience and knowledge. However hard we try, texts remain elusive and do not allow us to enter the secret rooms where Michael and John are sitting at their writing-desks, thinking of times past and possible worlds, gazing over the wastelands of their thoughts and dreams, and then dipping their quills in ink and writing, not to each other, but to us, at the other end of a one-way conversation through time and space. Despite all our efforts to read between the lines and all our attempts to outsmart Byzantine writers by reconstructing

⁵ See A. Karpozilos, *The Letters of Ioannes Mauropous Metropolitan of Euchaita* (Thessaloniki, 1990), letter no. 5, lines 3–4.

⁶ As Psellos kindly reminded his friend in or shortly after 1075 when he delivered his *Encomium on John Mauropous* in the latter's presence: G. T. Dennis (ed.), *Michaeli Pselli Orationes Panegyricae* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1994), 143–74: no. 17, lines 425–441; translation: R. Anastasi, *Michele Psello, Encomio per Giovanni, piissimo metropolita di Euchaita e protosincello* (Padua, 1968), 55–6.

⁷ E. N. Papaioannou, 'Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and the Self in Byzantine Epistolography', in W. Hörandner and M. Grünbart (eds), *L' épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique* (Paris, 2003), 75–83; E. N. Papaioannou, 'Der Glasort des Textes: Selbstheit und Ontotypologie im byzantinischen Briefschreiben (10. und 11. Jh.)', in W. Hörandner, J. Koder, and M. Stassinopoulou (eds), *Wiener Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik. Beiträge zum Symposium Vierzig Jahre Institut für Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik der Universität Wien* (Vienna, 2004), 324–36. See now S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013).

and deconstructing their literary stratagems, in the end the self remains a mystery. Texts offer self-representations, not selves.

∴

So, what is the self-representation of John Mauropous? The answer to this question is offered by Vat. gr. 676, an eleventh-century manuscript that contains the collected works of John Mauropous: his poems, his letters, and his orations. As Daniele Bianconi demonstrated in a brilliant paper, this manuscript is the master copy and goes directly back to papers in the possession of the author himself.⁸ *Perlschrift* is notoriously difficult to date, but Bianconi sees parallels with a group of manuscripts copied between 1066 and 1088. I think we can narrow down the date of Vat. gr. 676 even further. In the book epigrams on fol. IV, the author informs us that he ‘is the miserable shepherd of Euchaita and also a synkellos’ (see later in this chapter); in sharp contrast, however, the scribe tells us in the index on fol. III: ‘These are the labours and words of John, who *was* the synkellos and the bishop here’.⁹ This clearly indicates that when Mauropous commissioned his complete oeuvre to be copied, he was still in Euchaita, but that by the time the manuscript had been produced, he was no longer metropolitan of Euchaita. As John Mauropous resigned from his post in or shortly after 1075, this would give us a quite accurate date for the manuscript. Whatever the precise date, it is important to note that Mauropous’ literary works have survived in a manuscript produced at the behest of the author himself, whereas most Byzantine texts, including the letters of Psellos, have come down to us in unauthorized manuscript copies.¹⁰ This does not necessarily mean that the readings of Vat. gr. 676 are by definition better than those of the average Psellian manuscript: scribal errors may occur at any stage of the textual tradition, including the archetype.¹¹ And yet few would doubt that Vat. gr. 676 is as close as one may come to what the author actually wrote.

At first sight Mauropous’ literary self-representation is that of a typical eleventh-century intellectual, thoroughly steeped in the writings of the ancients, committed to the cause of enlightened Hellenism and endowed with a sensitive understanding of the nature of mankind—almost a humanist, one

⁸ D. Bianconi, ‘«Piccolo assaggio di abbondante fragranza»: Giovanni Mauropode e il Vat. gr. 676’, *JÖB* 61 (2011), 89–103.

⁹ Bollig-Lagarde, *Iohannis Euchaitorum*, p. VI.

¹⁰ See E. N. Papaioannou, ‘Fragile Literature: Byzantine Letter Collections and the Case of Michael Psellos’, in P. Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine: le texte en tant que message immédiat* (Paris, 2012), 289–328.

¹¹ For scribal errors in the letters of Mauropous in Vat. gr. 676, see Karpozilos, *Letters*, 36–7.

would say, if the term were not so anachronistic. He is at his best when dealing with ethical issues, such as the instability of life and the frailty of human existence, which Mauropous often exemplifies with references to the vicissitudes of his own life. He is the author of several poems *eis heauton*, in which he expresses his wish to live in tranquillity and peace, far away from the madding crowds and the pressures of society: he has no need of riches, power, and glory, but prefers to read and to study scripture. All in all, Mauropous gives the impression of someone who is in control of himself, well-balanced, restrained.

Upon closer inspection, however, this highly idealized self-portrait begins to show cracks. And to understand what these cracks are, let us turn to the two book epigrams on folio I^v of Vat. gr. 676, which have so far escaped the attention of the scholarly world, with the sole exception of Floris Bernard.¹² As the texts can be found in the introduction to the Bollig-Lagarde edition, the edition used by all and sundry, ignorance is no excuse—it is just plain oversight, I am afraid. These are the two texts on the title page:

Ἰωάννου φρόντισμα ταῦτα καὶ πόνος,
 Ἄνδρὸς φυγόντος κλήσιν ἄλλην δευτέραν·
 Ὡς ἀσθενῆς γάρ, ἀξιώματος βάρος
 Ὅγκον τε δόξης οὐχ ὑπέστη βαστάσαι,
 Ἄλλ' εὐσταλῆς ἔμεινε καὶ φόρτου δίχα.
 Κοῦφος διέπλει τὴν θάλασσαν τοῦ βίου,
 Καὶ τῆς προνοίας ἐτρύφησε τὴν χάριν.
 Οὐκοῦν ἄμοιρος προσθέτων ἐπωνύμων,
 Τῇ κυρία κλήσει δὲ κοσμεῖται μόνη·
 Πλὴν εἴ τις αὐτὸν ἐν θεοῦ διακόνους
 Τάττων, ἐκεῖθεν μείζονα κλήσιν νέμοι,
 Φέρουσαν οὐδὲν εἰς διάγνωσιν πλέον.
 Σὺ δ' εἰ θέλεις, τρίσσευε τὸν τοῦ Κλαυδίου·
 Φθόνος γὰρ οὐδεὶς πατρικῶν γνωρισμάτων.

This is the work and oeuvre of 'John', an author who shied away from other names, because, being weak, he could not bear the burden of office and the gravity of glory; instead, he remained nimble and weightless, sailed lightly across the sea of life, and enjoyed the grace of providence. Therefore, he bears no additional appellations, but is adorned with his first name only, unless one would range him among the servants of God and hence give him a loftier name, 'Deacon', without further need of identification—though, if you wish, you may add a third one: that of 'Nephew of the Bishop of Klaudioupolis', for there is no shame in being named after one's family.

¹² F. Bernard, 'The Circulation of Poetry in Eleventh-Century Byzantium', in S. Neocleous, *Papers from the First and Second Post-Graduate Forums in Byzantine Studies: Sailing to Byzantium* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), 145–60, at 149–52, and F. Bernard, *The Beats of the Pen: Social Contexts of Reading and Writing Poetry in Eleventh-Century Constantinople* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Ghent, 2010), 76–8. See now F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081* (Oxford, 2014), 133–5.

Πάλαι μὲν οὕτως, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὕτω πάλιν·
 Ποιμὴν μὲν οἰκτρὸς Εὐχαιτῶν ὁ γράφων,
 Ἔστιν δὲ καὶ σύγκελλος. ὦ πῶς καὶ πόθεν;
 Θεία πρόνοια, σοὶ χάρις· σὰ γὰρ τάδε·
 Αὐτὴ γὰρ οἷς ἔκρινας, εἰργάσω τρόποις.
 Πρὸς ταῦτα δ' ἡμεῖς οὐδέν· αὐτὴ μαρτύρει.

That was then, but now it is different: the author is the miserable shepherd of Euchaita, and he is a synkellos as well. O, how did this come about? Holy providence, thanks be to thee, for it was thou who arrangedst this, working in ways thou sawest fit. I had nothing to do with it – please be my witness.¹³

Floris Bernard assumes that the first epigram was copied from an earlier collection and that Mauropous included it here ‘as a truthful relict’ of times past, whereas the second epigram serves as the preface to the collection in Vat. gr. 676.¹⁴ Although I agree that the first of these two book epigrams must date from before Mauropous’ consecration to the see of Euchaita in 1049–1050 and refers to an earlier edition of sorts (about which it would be idle to speculate), I do not think its inclusion here is a matter of editorial scrupulousness—it is not an attempt to present a ‘truthful’ account of previous editions, nor is it indicative of a particular historical sensitivity to, and interest in, ‘relics’ of the past. The monumentalization of the past is in fact a modern pastime. If an analogy is needed here, one might rather think of the re-use of *spolia* in Byzantine architecture, where the aim is, likewise, not to preserve the remnants of times past, but to incorporate these into something new. In analysing a reused text, such as this one, the question is not so much what its purpose may have been in the past, but what purpose it serves in its new context. The epigram that tells us that the author is called John, that he is a deacon, and that he is the nephew of the bishop of Klaudioupolis, is not included because all three details were once true at a certain stage of Mauropous’ career,¹⁵ but because it serves as a foil against which Mauropous posits his present misery. It is only by reading the first epigram in combination with the second that we may begin to understand that, on the title page of Vat. gr. 676, the author employs autobiography and self-referentiality as tools with which to decode the meaning of the various texts in it, thus presenting the collection as a meaningful whole rather than a random selection of odd bits and pieces written in the course of many years.¹⁶

¹³ Bollig-Lagarde, *Iohannis Euchaitorum*, pp. V–VI.

¹⁴ See n. 12: the quote comes from *The Beats of the Pen*, 78.

¹⁵ See Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 23–4 and 27–8.

¹⁶ For a similar stratagem employed by Mauropous in the composition of his poetry book, see M. D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: Texts and Contexts* (Vienna, 2003), 62–5.

So, I would say the clue is in the second epigram, which, by juxtaposing then and now, otium and office, happiness and misery, cleverly subverts the message of the first epigram. The former informs us that John the Deacon was immensely grateful that he did not have to ‘bear the burden of office and the gravity of glory’, but rather ‘remained nimble and weightless, sailed lightly across the sea of life and enjoyed the grace of providence’. The latter tells us that the same John who loved his otium and begged not to be promoted, became a metropolitan and a synkellos after all. And this thanks to holy providence: *Θεία πρόνοια, σοὶ χάρις!* It can be difficult, even hazardous, to translate from one language into another, from one culture into another. I assume that most of us, reading the Greek, cannot help but smile and interpret the text in an ironic way: well, thanks a lot, holy providence. But I do not think this is what Mauropous meant to say. It is rather a message of humility and resignation—an acknowledgment that, as a good Christian, Mauropous could not but accept God’s decisions, even if it meant that he had to sacrifice all that was dear to him. An ironic reading of this text would imply that Mauropous is protesting against God’s will, and such blasphemy is hardly conceivable in Byzantium. However, hidden under a layer of rhetoric and piety, his words do express a feeling of bitter resentment at the fact that he had been forced to give up his pleasant life as an intellectual in Constantinople. And the defiant words *πρὸς ταῦτα δ’ ἡμεῖς οὐδέν* strongly suggest that if it had been up to him, he would never have accepted the bishopric.

There is a sort of perverse consistency in the way Mauropous, whenever he discusses the subject of his consecration, keeps returning to the theme of divine providence. Let us look first at some of his letters. In letter 45 Mauropous declares:

The fear I feared has come upon me: consecration, episcopal throne, cares and affairs . . . It has become a reality and, as you will testify, throughout my whole life nothing has been more dreadful to me or more abominable and more to be avoided than this. But since it was thus decided upon either by providence which presides over all, or by . . . (I don’t know what to call it), thanks are due to him who has thus arranged matters, thanks to him even for things that I did not wish.

And in letter 50 he states:

I am greatly perplexed and cannot believe it, for I had expected anything but this radical change in my life, since I have always endeavoured to avoid such things at all costs, as you surely will admit. But perhaps this has come about for my instruction, so that I might learn that we humans do not always govern our own destinies completely, and that I, like everybody else, must submit to and obey providence, which directs everything, even if the outcome is often not what one had hoped for.¹⁷

¹⁷ The translation of these two passages is based on that of Karpozilos, *Letters*, 138 (no. 45) and 146 (no. 50).

The same pattern of angry despair at first and then bitter resignation to the fate that has befallen him, emerges from two highly interesting and highly intricate poems, nos. 92 and 93. In the first poem, entitled 'On himself', Mauropous confers with the rational part of his soul and weighs up the pros and cons of a possible appointment, and overall the balance is negative. Mauropous can only think of reasons why he should not accept the post: first, the fickleness of human existence (any appointment is by definition temporary); second, all the responsibilities that come with such an elevated position; third, his illness and weakness (he is not fit enough to fulfil this difficult and burdensome task); fourth, his contemplative nature and love of solitude; and fifth, his aversion to being in the limelight (he does not seek the glory of this world, but that of God).¹⁸ All of these arguments sound solid enough, but the emperor and the patriarch were apparently not particularly impressed by this fine piece of rhetoric and decided to go ahead with the appointment in spite of his remonstrations. When the deed was done, Mauropous wrote a second poem, entitled 'Palinode: after my consecration', in which he retracted his earlier statements on the topic of making a career in the upper echelons of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The poem states that nothing is stable in this life, nothing secure, nothing certain: it is a fool that thinks he knows it all. This is something Mauropous has learnt the hard way, because whereas he thought that he had steered free from the dangers of public office, he could not escape the inevitable. He writes: 'That is how pernicious self-deceit makes us believe that we are in control of ourselves and can arrange our lives as we seem fit, thus preventing us from seeing that there is no escape from God, who turns everything around in his all-wise logic and governs us all for our own benefit'. Mauropous then goes on expressing his surprise at seeing his own plans thwarted by God almighty, who in His mysterious ways decided otherwise. He too had to surrender to God: 'I too yielded. Is there another option in the face of the mighty Lord? So I had to give in, and utterly defeated, I have already submitted to the heavy yoke. I testify to his almighty authority, which can easily bend anyone, however unbending they may be.'¹⁹ This is a white flag, a sign of surrender, not the voluntary act of someone who recognizes he has been wrong all along, but of someone who is forced to admit defeat. Mauropous understands that he cannot run away from his responsibilities, but must accept his destiny. And it is this destiny which he calls divine providence, the unfathomable will of God, which necessarily prevails over human wishes and desires.

¹⁸ Bollig-Lagarde, *Iohannis Euchaitorum*, 45–8.

¹⁹ Bollig-Lagarde, *Iohannis Euchaitorum*, 48–50. The two quotes are vv. 19–24 and 52–8.

∴

In his excellent study of eleventh-century poetry, Floris Bernard argues that Mauropous arranged his collection of poems according to ‘a biographical logic’. The poems do not follow an exact chronological sequence, but are ordered in such a way that certain stages of Mauropous’ life are set off against each other, culminating in the crisis of his election to the see of Euchaita.²⁰ It is interesting to note that almost all the poems seem to date from his Constantinopolitan period: the twenty-five years spent in Euchaita are passed over in silence, with a few notable exceptions, such as the dedication of an image of Monomachos in the cathedral church of Euchaita (poem no. 57). The most valuable source of information concerning Mauropous’ tenure of the see of Euchaita can be found in his homilies, which have been largely ignored with the exception of the three homilies that deal with the Pecheneg threat and the revolt of Leo Tornikios in 1047.²¹ The homilies are divided into two distinct categories—‘general’ and ‘special’—each consisting of seven homilies in total. The ‘general’ homilies pertain to recurring feasts of the liturgical calendar (nos. 177–83) and the ‘special’ homilies are speeches delivered at special occasions (nos. 184–7) as well as speeches celebrating local saints (nos. 188–90).²² It is worth noticing that the first of the series of ‘special’ homilies, strategically placed in the middle, is the text Mauropous delivered to the people of Euchaita upon arrival. Here, too, in the way the homilies have been ordered, one detects an obvious urge to put his consecration centre stage.

However, it is above all in the collection of letters that Mauropous’ autobiographical impulse comes to the fore. The collection has a tripartite structure centred around the pivotal moment in Mauropous’ life, his election to the see of Euchaita: the happy years before the crisis (nos. 1–42), the crisis itself (nos. 43–50), and the unhappy years after the crisis (51–75). In contrast to the poems and the homilies, the letters appear to be arranged more or less in chronological order.²³ See, for instance, letters nos. 61, 64, and 69. Letter 61 explicitly states that six months had passed after Mauropous left Constantinople and letter 64, too, refers to a period of six months. Letter 69, on the contrary, was written seven months after his departure. Though chronology is the overarching structural principle in Mauropous’ collection of letters, other

²⁰ See Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 128–48.

²¹ J. Lefort, ‘Rhétorique et politique: trois discours de Jean Mauropous en 1047’, *TM* 6 (1976), 265–303.

²² See Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 141–69.

²³ Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 39 and n. 107, and *Letters*, 29–31. In his review of Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, N. Oikonomides, *Südostforschungen* 42 (1983), 486–8, at 487, n. 6, is not convinced that the collection of Mauropous’ letters is arranged in chronological order, and neither is A. Kazhdan, ‘Some Problems in the Biography of John Mauropous’, *JÖB* 43 (1993), 87–111, at 102–3.

considerations also come into play, such as the wish to bracket together related letters.²⁴ For instance, letter 64 is followed by nos. 65 and 66, not because all three necessarily date from the same period, but because they form a dossier of letters written to the Patriarch at the beginning of Mauropous' tenure of the see of Euchaita.

The letters in the middle part of the collection (nos. 43–50) read as a personal memoir, recounting the tragedy of his consecration in strict chronological order from the moment he is informed of his imminent election until the preparations for his departure from Constantinople. In letter 43 Mauropous thanks a friend for his letter, which he received in the winter and informs him that he has to leave the capital because of an unexpected reversal of his good fortune; God works in mysterious ways. The next letter, no. 44, tells his addressee that disaster has struck. In letter 45 Mauropous recognizes that his consecration is a fact and there is no worse scenario than that; he feels ill and depressed. In no. 46 he thanks a provincial judge for his friendly letter and in no. 47 he expresses his gratitude that his friend at least has been saved. In letter 48 he congratulates a metropolitan on being safe and sound although the West is 'thriving in adversity' (Pecheneg threat?), and tells him that he has been ordained against his will by those in power; he feels ill and depressed. In no. 49 he writes to a certain Michael asking a certain favour. And letter 50, addressed to a relative and powerful cleric (Leo of Ohrid?), states that Mauropous has officially been ordained—it is the work of divine providence; may his friend pray for him and visit him before his departure.

I have the distinct impression that the letters in the first part are ordered chronologically as well. Two letters can be dated precisely: no. 26 is related to the revolt of Tornikios in late 1047 and no. 23 deals with Psellos' elevation to the rank of consul of the philosophers earlier that year. In 1047, Mauropous played an important political role as the principal adviser of Monomachos; to quote Lefort, 'le discours de décembre [...] était le triomphe, rhétorique et politique, de Mauropous [...] il parlait aussi comme principal conseiller de l'empereur, ce qu'il était manifestement en 1047'.²⁵ Unfortunately, good things never last. In letter 27, Mauropous is already referring to certain unspecified problems at court and complaining of his bad health. Health issues are a recurring theme in subsequent letters from Mauropous and will be his major excuse for declining the post in Euchaita.²⁶ Throughout the first part of his letter collection Mauropous is asked by all and sundry to intervene on their behalf and ensure that so-and-so will be appointed to this or that post, will not be prosecuted for legal wrongdoings, or may benefit otherwise from

²⁴ As rightly pointed out by Karpozilos, *Letters*, 31.

²⁵ Lefort, 'Rhétorique et politique', 302.

²⁶ See letters 27, 29, 37, 45, 48, and poem 92.

his mediation.²⁷ This strongly suggests that Mauropous, within the social networks to which he belongs, has the right contacts and is in a position to help others. In letters 19–20, Mauropous replies to criticisms that since he is at court, he has become inaccessible to his friends and is only interested in fame and fortune. In letter 5, Mauropous is offered the important post of chartophylax in the patriarchal administration: an offer, which he, true to his motto *λάθε βιώσας*, declines. In the *Chronographia* Psellos informs us that he himself was the first to be introduced at the court of Emperor Constantine Monomachos and then took care to bring along his good friends Xiphilinos and, later on, Mauropous. Presumably this happened in 1043.²⁸ Seeing that in his early correspondence Mauropous acts as a middleman, has good connections at court, and is considered to be a worthy candidate for the post of chartophylax, I strongly suspect that all these letters were written after 1043.

As for the letters in the third part, those written from exile—as Mauropous himself viewed his election to the see of Euchaita²⁹—it is impossible to date most of them with any accuracy. No. 51 is a particularly angry letter to Psellos, telling him that he feels abandoned and betrayed by his so-called friends, and especially by Psellos who has misled him. Letter 52 informs us that life in the province is as horrible as Mauropous expected it to be; this complaint is repeated in no. 54, in which he states that his life is full of hardship and unbearable suffering. Letter 60 explains why he has not yet replied to letters from his friends: he has no time for *belles-lettres*, because there are more urgent matters to take care of, such as ‘the tearful war’ which ‘is now pressing hard here’ (Seljuk incursions?). No. 61, which Mauropous wrote six months after leaving Constantinople, refers to all kinds of problems he had to sort out on account of his exile. No. 63 tells that Basil still has access to the court, and deservedly so; but Mauropous is no longer welcome there. No. 64 is a letter to the Patriarch written six months after his departure from Constantinople, informing him that it took Mauropous two months to reach Euchaita because of stormy weather; there are various references to unspecified problems, but the people of Euchaita have been most kind to him. In no. 69, Mauropous responds to a letter from a metropolitan; the last time he saw him was seven months ago. In no. 70 we read that a fellow intellectual has entered the monastery, and in no. 75 Mauropous complains that an *archon*, on his way to Paphlagonia where he was to take up his new post, had passed through Euchaita without visiting him.³⁰ In no. 74, Mauropous writes to a young man

²⁷ See letters 3, 4, 6–8, 10–11, 13–15, 23–6, 28, 31–2, 35–6 and 39–41.

²⁸ *Chronographia* VI, § 192. See also Mauropous poem 54.

²⁹ In letter S 173 Psellos recognizes that Mauropous’ consecration is in fact an exile: *δυστυχῶν γὰρ αὐτὸς τῶν ὄν ἴσμεν ὑπερορίαν καὶ περιφρόνησιν* (440.31–441.1).

³⁰ Karpozilos, *Letters*, 25–6 and 255–6, assumes that letter 75 refers to Mauropous’ succession in or after c.1075. R. Anastasi, ‘Giovanni Mauropode ep. 174 de Lagarde’, *Siculorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 34 (1981) 274–9, rightly understands that Mauropous mentions an *archon*, not a cleric, but

inquiring after his progress: as this is exactly the kind of question an uncle who pays for his nephew's education might ask, I suspect that this is the nephew mentioned in Psellos' letter to Mauropous KD 34 as making good progress under his guidance in the years 1049–50.³¹ Seeing that the few letters that can be dated with any certainty were written in the first year of his stay in Euchaita, it is reasonable to assume that Mauropous deliberately selected letters that dealt with the period immediately after his arrival in Euchaita. True enough, it cannot be excluded that some of these letters date from long after this event, but the problem is that Mauropous' biography can only be written on the basis of data provided by the author himself, who, as the title page of Vat. gr. 676 already indicates and numerous poems and letters evince, wished to impress upon his readers that his election to the see of Euchaita was the pivotal moment of his life, defining everything before and after it.

To recap, letters 1 to 42 appear to have been written between 1043 and 1049, letters 43 to 50 in 1049/1050, and letters 51 to 77 in the first year or years of Mauropous' stay in Euchaita. It is worth noting that the letter collection does not contain letters from the first thirty or forty years of Mauropous' life, when he was not yet a fawning intellectual at the imperial court, nor does it contain letters from the last thirty years of his professional life, which he spent first in Euchaita and then, as a monk, in Constantinople, in the famous Petra monastery. In other words, the letter collection does not offer a representative selection of letters written in the course of Mauropous' long life, but is restricted to a relatively short span of time, structured around the transformative moth-from-the-cocoon moment when John the Deacon, also known as the Nephew of the Bishop of Klaudioupolis, had to give in to divine providence and morphed into John, Metropolitan of Euchaita and Synkellos.

∴

Turning now to Psellos, the letter collection of Mauropous contains a few letters that appear to be addressed to him. As the collection does not offer headings, it is often quite difficult to establish who the recipients are, unless the letters themselves contain internal clues. Such is the case of letters 23 and 51, both of which address a certain *Κωνσταντῖνος* in the main text. The

wrongly assumes that there is a connection with the legal dispute mentioned in Psellos' letter KD 221. For the correct interpretation, see Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 109–10.

³¹ See N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London, 1983), 152–3. For KD 34, see the translation in the Appendix to this chapter. This is probably the same nephew, by the name of Theodore, who composed a hymn in honour of his uncle: ed. S. G. Mercati, 'Ufficio di Giovanni Mauropode Euchaita composto dal nipote Teodore', in *Mémorial Louis Petit* (Bucarest, 1948), 347–60 (repr. in S. G. Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina*, 2 vols (Bari, 1970), II, 54–65).

recipient of these two letters is a close friend of Mauropous and is clearly a fellow intellectual; it is generally accepted that this is Michael Psellos, who was Constantine Psellos before his brief spell as a monk on Mount Olympos in 1054–5, and I see no reason to call this identification into question. Ljubarskij and Karpozilos have found more traces of Psellos in Mauropous' correspondence; I find most of these attributions unconvincing.³²

Aside from nos. 23 and 51, there are two letters that probably address Psellos: letters 33 and 60.³³ The former is a letter to a fellow intellectual who had asked Mauropous to write an encomiastic text, which he then would pass off as his own, in the hope that both would be remunerated by the imperial administration. Patronage is one of the least understood aspects of the cultural life of the Byzantines, partly because of the lack of sources and partly because modern scholars tend to turn a blind eye to the phenomenon.³⁴ Patronage usually involves one or more go-betweens, hired to establish contacts between those who commission literary or artistic works and the actual producers of these works. This seems to be the case here as well, but with one striking difference: the middleman is an author in his own right and intends to publish the text under his own name. If this middleman is indeed Psellos, then Byzantinists have a serious problem, for it would mean that certain texts that go under the name of the prolific Psellos, might very well be the work of Mauropous or others. The moot question, of course, is whether letter 33 is addressed to Psellos. The letter indicates that the recipient is an author who tends to lavish compliments on people, including Mauropous himself, and who is known for his exalted praises. This 'gold-flowing Nile'³⁵ normally

³² Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο*, 70–83, esp. 72, n. 7: nos. 23, 51, 59–60, and 70. Karpozilos, *Letters*, nos. 1, 23, 33, 51, and, with a question mark, nos. 9, 60, and 70; in his earlier publication, *Συμβολή*, 116, n. 34, he omits no. 9, but adds nos. 30, 49, and 59 to this list. In no. 1 Mauropous compliments a fellow intellectual on his epistolary skills: Karpozilos sees a link with Psellos' letter S 105, I don't. In no. 9 he congratulates the new governor of Boukellarion on his appointment. In no. 30 he congratulates X (Xiphilinos?) on his brother's appointment. In no. 49 he writes to Michael, a fellow countryman and fellow student, on behalf of X. In no. 59 he asks a fellow ecclesiastic to intervene on his behalf with the patriarch. In no. 70 he writes to a fellow intellectual who had recently entered the monastery. Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 97 and 104, is rightly critical of these attributions.

³³ For letter no. 60 see Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο*, 82, and Karpozilos, *Letters*, 242–3. For letter no. 33, see Karpozilos, *Letters*, 227–8, who sees a connection with Psellos' letter KD 33—an assumption rightly questioned by Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 104, and Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 305, n. 46.

³⁴ Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 291–333, is the exception that proves the rule; see also Lautertermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 34–45.

³⁵ F. Lauritzen, 'Christopher of Mytilene's Parody of the Haughty Mauropous', *BZ* 100 (2007), 125–32, totally misinterprets the meaning of the word *χρυσορροίας* in letter 33 and Christopher Mitylenaios' poem no 55: in the former it stands for the gold-flowing Nile (=Psellos), in the latter it denotes the gold-flowing Paktolos (=Constantine IX Monomachos). Furthermore, there is no proof whatsoever that Mitylenaios and Psellos were close friends, as the author avers: there is not a single letter addressed to the poet and not a single reference to him in

writes extensively to Mauropous, but has now become a trickling stream—and it is because of this perceived reticence that Mauropous is so upset that he even threatens to punch his correspondent in the face. Such aggression suggests a fair amount of intimacy. In short, letter no. 33 addresses an exuberant personality known for his lack of sincerity and excessive words of praise, who pours forth a constant stream of words and has such a close relation with Mauropous that the latter even resorts to fisticuffs. If this is not Psellos, who else would it be?

Then there is no. 60, a letter written not long after Mauropous' arrival in Euchaita, in which he replies to his best friend (*φίλτατός μοι τῶν φίλων*), who had rebuked him for not writing. Mauropous' excuses for not writing are twofold: firstly, he is heavily involved in administrative matters, especially as the result of hostile activities in the region of Euchaita (Seljuk raids?), and secondly, he feels betrayed by his own friends, and especially by his best friend whom he calls 'the ornament of letters' and 'the temple of wisdom'. Seeing that letter 51, which almost certainly addresses Psellos, expresses the same sentiments of betrayal and abandonment, it is reasonable to assume that the 'best friend' addressed in letter 60 is Psellos.

Apart from these four letters that appear to address Psellos (nos. 23, 33, 51, and 60), Mauropous will doubtless have written dozens more. These are lost, apart from one letter transmitted by chance among the letters of Psellos (S 202, covered later in this chapter). One reason is the selective nature of letter collections: letters are selected for their literary qualities, and not because they are particularly informative or shed light on the friendship of two great authors. Another reason, obviously, is that Mauropous deliberately selected only letters related to the decisive moment in his life, his election to the see of Euchaita, including the prelude to it and the aftermath—and this is why his letter collection does not contain letters either to young Psellos or to Psellos when he was no longer Constantine, but Michael.

∴

Prolific as always, Psellos has left behind a tremendous number of letters, a legacy that threatens to collapse under the weight of its own excess.³⁶ A few of these are explicitly addressed to the metropolitan of Euchaita, others have

the various writings of Psellos. They clearly operated in different literary circles. See also Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 185–6 and 328, n. 94.

³⁶ E. N. Papaioannou. 'Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Neuedition', *JÖB* 48 (1998), 67–117, and P. Moore, *Iter Psellianum: A Detailed Listing of Manuscript Sources for All Works Attributed to Michael Psellos* (Toronto, 2005).

been identified as letters addressed to Mauropous by past scholarship. Most of these tentative identifications are at best problematic, if not simply wrong. Drexel assumed that letters KD 217, 228, 265, and 269 were directed to Mauropous.³⁷ In KD 217 Psellos recommends someone to a good friend of his: it is not clear why this friend should be Mauropous; in KD 269 he complains that X does not write often enough: this could be anyone; in KD 228 Psellos is shattered by the news of X's calamity and expresses his wish to visit the monastery of the Horaia Pege (on Mount Olympos in Bithynia): this letter almost certainly addresses Xiphilinos, who was forced to retire to this monastery;³⁸ and in KD 265 he reports back to John, telling him that his nephew, a student of Psellos, makes good progress: Drexel was unaware of the fact that the letter is addressed to Xiphilinos in Vat. gr. 1912.³⁹ Weiss thought he could recognize Mauropous in three letters to a 'spiritual father' (M 13–15)⁴⁰; but there is no reason to believe Mauropous was ever anyone's spiritual father, let alone that of Michael Psellos.⁴¹ Ljubarskij assumed that letters S 91–3 are addressed to Mauropous; however, S 91 is directed to an ascetic celebrated for his monastic virtues, S 92 addresses the patriarch, and S 93 is a letter to a provincial civil servant telling him that the emperor is willing to relieve him of his administrative duties.⁴²

KD 13–15 are letters written by young Psellos to his teacher, whom Ljubarskij identified as John Mauropous.⁴³ The first letter relates how Psellos first attended a wedding and then decided, in the early hours of the Sunday of the Holy Fathers,⁴⁴ to travel to the monastery of the Holy Fathers in Bithynia (Medikion), where he never arrived because of stormy conditions at sea,

³⁷ For KD 217, 228, and 269, see the edition. In the edition KD 265 is identified as a letter to Xiphilinos, but Drexel subsequently revised his opinion: F. Drexel, 'Nachträge zur Ausgabe der Psellosbriefe von Kurtz-Drexel', *BZ* 41 (1941), 309–10. But see below, main text, and n. 39.

³⁸ Compare the following letters by Psellos: M 5 (=G 17), M 7 (=G 30), KD 177 and 237: see P. Gautier, 'Quelques lettres de Psellos inédites ou déjà éditées', *REB* 44 (1986), 111–97, at 158, n. 1 and 183, n. 2. On Xiphilinos, Psellos and the monastery of Horaia Pege, see P. Gautier, 'Éloge funèbre de Nicolas de la Belle Source par Michel Psellos moine à l'Olympe', *Byzantina* 6 (1974), 9–69, at 16–22.

³⁹ For the heading of KD 265 in Vat. gr. 1912, see E. Maltese, 'Epistole inedite di Michele Psello', *SIFC*, s. III, 5 (1987), 82–98, 214–23, and 6 (1988) 110–34, at 215.

⁴⁰ G. Weiss, 'Forschungen zu den noch nicht edierten Schriften des Michael Psellos', *Byzantina* 4 (1972), 9–52, at 27; so also M. L. Agati, 'Tre epistole inedite di Michele Psello', *Siculorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 33 (1980), 909–16. For the text of these letters, see Maltese, 'Epistole inedite', 120–1, nos. 13–15, and Maltese, 'Il ms. Barocci 131 per l'epistolario di Michele Psello', *Aevum* 63 (1989), 186–92, at 187–9.

⁴¹ As rightly pointed out by R. Anastasi, 'A proposito di un recente libro su Psello', *Siculorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 27 (1974), 414, n. 76, and Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 89–90.

⁴² Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο*, 72–3, n. 7. Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 90–1, rightly rejects this identification.

⁴³ Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο*, 74.

⁴⁴ This is either the seventh Sunday after Easter or the last Sunday before Christmas: both feastdays are confusingly known as the *κυριακή τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων*.

depicted in graphic detail; when he finally returned to Constantinople, he was exhausted and fell victim to smallpox.⁴⁵ In the following two letters he reproaches his teacher for visiting him only once on his sickbed and recounts a dream he had about his teacher in an idyllic spot, whereas he himself was seriously ill, sweating under five blankets and his body covered with pustules. The mixture of respect and playful banter, with which Psellos talks to his teacher in these three letters, strongly suggests that this is indeed Mauropous. As Psellos in his *Encomium on his Mother* tells us that he had never left Constantinople before the age of 16,⁴⁶ letters KD 13–15 obviously date from after 1034. Given the superb rhetoric and fine humour of these letters, indicating that Psellos had already found his own voice, a date in Psellos' adolescence or even early manhood seems very likely, and this supposition is corroborated by a tiny, but significant detail. In his first letter Psellos explicitly tells that, instead of attending Mauropous' classes, he went to celebrate the feast of the Holy Fathers.⁴⁷ On Sundays schools are obviously closed, and the only explanation for what would otherwise be a bizarre statement, is that Psellos does not refer to an ordinary school, but to a gathering of intellectuals: one of these *theatra* we read about in our Byzantine sources.⁴⁸ It is hardly likely that pupils in their early teens, even pupils as gifted as Psellos, were welcome at these private literary gatherings.

Apart from these three letters from Psellos to Mauropous, there are two other letters previous scholarship rightly suspected addressed Mauropous: M 12 (=G 33) and KD 190. In Vat. Barb. gr. 240 (the sole manuscript to preserve the letter), M 12 bears the heading *πρὸς τὸν αὐτόν* and since the preceding letter, S 182, is addressed to Nicholas Skleros, the 'same' would be him; however, in Par. gr. 1182 letter S 182 is addressed to Mauropous, not to Skleros, and it is therefore generally accepted that the heading 'to the same' in fact refers to the former, not the latter.⁴⁹ KD 190 does not bear a heading, but Kurtz rightly identified the addressee as Mauropous, because Psellos calls him

⁴⁵ For the identification of the disease, see R. Volk, *Der medizinische Inhalt der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1990), 424–7. Volk, 443–7, incorrectly assumes that KD 177 and 228 deal with the same illness and are addressed to Mauropous as well: in fact, these two letters address Xiphilinos and were written in or before 1054, when Xiphilinos' departure to the Horaia Pege affected Psellos so strongly that he developed a serious illness, for which see Volk, 436–9. See n. 38.

⁴⁶ U. Criscuolo, *Michele Psello. Autobiografia: Encomio per la madre* (Naples, 1989), 114.

⁴⁷ See KD 13, lines 11–25.

⁴⁸ The preceding letter, KD 12, refers to yet another literary circle young Psellos wished to become a member of. In it, he recounts a chance encounter with a learned bishop (why Drexel thinks this is the metropolitan of Kyzikos, whom Psellos unflatteringly calls 'full of divine simplicity' in S 79, is beyond me), when the latter was on his way to the *διδασκαλείον*: even if this indicates an actual school building where his literary circle would meet, it is out of the question that a bishop, on his sporadic visits to Constantinople, would be moonlighting as an ordinary teacher.

⁴⁹ See Maltese, 'Epistole inedite', 113–14 and Gautier, 'Quelques lettres', 187–8, n. 1.

ὁ μέγας Εὐχάιτων Ἑλλην, ‘the great Hellene of Euchaita’: if this is not Mauropous, I do not know who else it could be.⁵⁰

Letters are notoriously difficult to date, and Psellos’ letters to Mauropous are no exception. Kazhdan noted that letters sent to Mauropous when he was metropolitan of Euchaita, address him as *δέσποτα*, plus all kinds of flattering adjectives indicating how pious and wise this ‘lordship’ was, whereas letters sent to Mauropous before and after his episcopate never refer to him as *δεσπότης*.⁵¹ This observation has gone unnoticed, despite its obvious usefulness in sorting out the letters of Psellos to Mauropous. There is only one apparent exception: KD 190, the letter mentioned earlier which refers to Mauropous as the ‘great Hellene of Euchaita’, but which fails to address him as ‘your lordship’. However, if one reads the whole passage (KD 190: 214.15–17) it becomes clear that Mauropous has not yet become metropolitan of Euchaita: ‘But for me, a Hellene in language and language alone, who would be more dear than the great Hellene of Euchaita, unless you disdain even this (*εἰ μὴδὲ τοῦτο ἀπαξιοῖ*) as a true Hellene?’ What does ‘this’ refer to? It cannot be their Hellenic identity equated with a shared interest in the Greek language as the vehicle of ancient *paideia* (excluding pagan thought, obviously). It cannot be their friendship either: throughout this letter there are numerous references to feelings of mutual love—in this passionate discourse of love, Mauropous is as enamoured with Psellos’ genius as Psellos is with Mauropous’ lofty rhetoric.⁵² This leaves us with one option only: ‘this’ refers to ‘of Euchaita’, which makes sense if one remembers that Mauropous in fact disdained the offer to become metropolitan of Euchaita and that Psellos played a crucial role in convincing him that he should accept his consecration (see, especially, Mauropous’ letter 51). Furthermore, the fact that Psellos inquires after Mauropous’ whereabouts (214.3–4: *ποῦ ποτε ἀλλ’ ἔζη*;) would make little sense if KD 190 had been written when Mauropous was already metropolitan of Euchaita—because then the answer would be simple: in Euchaita, where else? In other words, I strongly suspect that KD 190 dates from the period when Mauropous had not yet been consecrated to the see of Euchaita, but insiders knew of his imminent election. Since Mauropous was clearly not in Constantinople at the time, it would seem that he had retreated to some safe place, maybe a monastery on Mount Olympos (see the numerous references to ‘philosophy’ (=monasticism) throughout the letter and the comparison with the seat of the Olympian gods (213.22–6)).

⁵⁰ For the identification, see the edition. The identification is generally accepted, with the exception of Kazhdan, ‘Some Problems’, 91–2, who sees problems where there are none.

⁵¹ Kazhdan, ‘Some Problems’, 92–3. Likewise, Theophylaktos of Ohrid, an author imbued with Psellian rhetoric, invariably addresses his fellow bishops as *δέσποτα*: see M. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot, 1997), 170.

⁵² See S. Papaioannou, ‘Michael Psellos on Friendship and Love: Erotic Discourse in Eleventh-Century Constantinople’, *Early Medieval Europe* 19 (2011), 43–61.

∴

By sorting out the correspondence of Psellos on the criterion of presence or absence of references to Mauropous' episcopal rank and dignity,⁵³ one ends up with three distinct categories:

- letters that date from before the consecration: KD 13–15 (after 1034); S 182–3 (1043?); M 12 (=G 33) (1047); KD 229 (1048–9?); KD 190 (1049/50)
- letters that date from the period of Mauropous' episcopate: KD 34 (1049/50); KD 33 (1049/50?); S 173 (1053–4?); S 40 (1053–4?); KD 54 (1059?); S 80 (1059–60?); KD 45–6 (c.1060–70)
- letters that date from after his episcopate: KD 105, S 202 (after 1075).

I already discussed KD 13–15, hilarious letters of apology for playing truant and not attending Mauropous' literary salon. S 182–3 seem to date from the period when Psellos had already become a regular at the court of Monomachos and was trying to introduce Mauropous to the emperor. In the first letter he thanks Mauropous for his warm words of support and tells him he feels like he is walking on air, what with the excessive praise he has been larded with—but he is not certain that he should repay Mauropous by praising him in similar terms: in the presence of such loftiness, would silence not be more appropriate? However, whenever he mentions Mauropous in his conversations with others, including the emperor, he does not cease to praise him.⁵⁴ Letter S 182 provoked an angry reaction from Mauropous, to which Psellos responded in the next letter, S 183, telling him that by now he should have learnt to recognize Psellian irony—and no, his feelings for Mauropous have not changed: he loves him and whenever he can, at whatever social event, he mentions and praises Mauropous to whoever happens to be present, including the emperor; Mauropous should lighten up and be less morose. It is clear from these two letters that they were written in a period that Mauropous had no direct access to the emperor and needed the services of Psellos as go-between. And seeing that Psellos in S 182 explicitly states that the

⁵³ As J. C. Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes de la vie de Michel Psellos', *REB* 68 (2010), 5–60, at 13, rightly points out, another criterion for identifying addressees in Psellos' correspondence is the use of adjectives, such as *θεῖος*, *θειότατος*, *θεοτίμητος*, *θεοειδέστατος*, and *δοσιώτατος*, all of which refer to clerics and monks. In the case of Mauropous, however, this distinction does not help because he had already been ordained deacon, which explains why S 182, in my view one of the earliest letters to Mauropous, calls him *θειοτάτη ψυχή*.

⁵⁴ Letter S 182 ends with an obscure passage about the significance of the Pythagorean number 4 (the tetrad or tetractys), which Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 95, interprets as an oblique reference to the 'great four': Psellos, Mauropous, Xiphilinos, and Leichoudes—but apart from what Psellos tells us in his *Encomium on Leichoudes*, I find no trace of a particularly close friendship between Leichoudes and the other three in the sources. As Psellos explains, the Pythagorean tetrad stands for 'all', and having received 'all' from Mauropous, he is very pleased; my guess is that he alludes to a gift of four delicacies (say fish, fowl, fruits, etc.).

letter he had received from Mauropous testified to his education (*ταῖς σαῖς μαρτυρίαις περὶ τῆς ἐμῆς παιδείσεως*), it would seem that Psellos had completed his schooling not long ago. This all makes perfect sense in c.1043, when Psellos had obtained a footing at court, whereas Mauropous was still waiting to get access. Letter M 12 (=G 33) was written in 1047 when Psellos was appointed ‘consul of the philosophers’: I shall discuss this letter in detail in the next section.

KD 229 deals with an obscure moment in the life of Mauropous, when he had apparently fallen into disfavour with the emperor and was forced to leave his ancestral home, but was then given permission to return to his house: see poems 47–8.⁵⁵ In poem 47, Mauropous bids farewell to his house and recalls the happy days he had spent there; he then continues: ‘And therewith [with all these happy memories] you bend and break me, dear house; but reason and the longing for God and, in addition, the fear of death conquer all’ (vv. 33–5), thereby suggesting that personal motives were behind his decision to leave his beloved house and to live as a ‘beggar’ somewhere far away (vv. 36–42). However, in poem 48, Mauropous tells us that he returned to his home after seeing Christ in his dreams leading him back and after receiving a plea from the emperor urging him to resume his duties (vv. 3–12). It stands to reason that if it was the emperor who called him back, it was also the emperor who had sent him away: in other words, it was not Mauropous’ own choice to leave his house, but he had been forced to abandon it. However, it is worth noting that if this was indeed exile, it cannot have lasted long, for otherwise Mauropous would hardly have been able to regain possession of his house.

Let us now look at letter KD 229. Mauropous had apparently written a bitter letter, full of complaints and reproaches, to which Psellos, just as in S 183, responds by saying that he should not interpret his letters too literally and should try to cheer up a bit. There is even good reason to be cheerful: the emperor is full of praise for Mauropous’ rhetorical and philosophical talents and plans to call him back to Constantinople. However, it is crucial that Mauropous, when he appears before the emperor, should do his best to be as charming and amusing as possible: it is all a comedy, really, and Psellos will provide him with the necessary stage instructions. This letter is generally, but incorrectly, thought to refer to a temporary recall of the metropolitan of Euchaita from his post.⁵⁶ First of all, the letter does not mention his episcopate in Euchaita nor does it address him as *δέσποτα*. Secondly, if Mauropous had

⁵⁵ See Karpozilos, *Letters*, 18–19; P. Volpe Cacciatore, ‘I carmi “autobiografici” di Giovanni Mauropode’, in L. Torraca, *Scritti in onore di Italo Gallo* (Naples, 2002), 561–9, at 564–6; G. Cortassa, ‘I libri di Giovanni Mauropode’, *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Filologia, Linguistica e Tradizione classica Augusto Rostagna*, n.s., 6 (2007), 139–75, at 149–50; C. Livanos, ‘Exile and Return in John Mauropous, Poem 47’, *BMGS* 32 (2008) 38–49.

⁵⁶ See Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 45; Karpozilos, *Letters*, 23–4; E. de Vries-van der Velden, ‘La lune de Psellos’, *BSI* 57 (1996), 239–56, at 252–3.

indeed been called back and, presumably, deposed from his post in Euchaita, I fail to understand how he could be reinstated afterwards.⁵⁷ And thirdly, the letter strongly suggests that Mauropous' exile was of short duration: 'The brackish water that floods your soul and annoys you now that you have to deal with it is 'short' (not much, *βραχὺ*), whereas the potable and harmless water, from which you have drunk, is quite a lot (*πολὺ*) and a full cup of it is once again being prepared for you.' The letters of Mauropous leave no doubt that he stayed in Euchaita at least for the first year of his appointment—and nothing suggests that he abandoned his post after the first year. However, as indicated by poems 47–8, his election to the see of Euchaita was not the first time he was sent into exile, but the second time. And it makes perfect sense to situate KD 229 within the context of his first exile. As this first exile was just a short period of imperial displeasure with no serious consequences, it is difficult to establish its date with certainty, but it is worth noting that Mauropous' letter 27 (written after 1047, but before 1049–50) indicates that he had serious problems at the time. Though it is difficult to tease out meaning from it, this much is clear: X had accused Mauropous of fraud, embezzlement, or another form of financial misconduct (lines 13–14 and 18–20) and had convinced Y, a high-ranking and powerful civil servant to whom letter 27 is directed, to take legal action against Mauropous (lines 32–3), even though they were 'friends' (*passim*); Y had proposed a settlement of the matter (lines 10–11), but Mauropous had rejected this proposal because he thought the allegations were outrageous (lines 11–15); this rebuttal had apparently angered Y, who thought that Mauropous had 'disrespected' him (*passim*). In his letter Mauropous points out that if he had indeed committed a crime, which he had not, he would deserve to lose his possessions and wander like a poor beggar from door to door (lines 18–23). This is exactly the fate that befell him according to poem 47: he lost his house and had to beg for a living among strangers.

I have already discussed the contents of KD 190, the letter Psellos wrote to Mauropous, when the latter was hiding somewhere, afraid of being appointed to the see of Euchaita—a sad fate he eventually had to accept.

The letters written by Psellos during the many years of Mauropous' episcopate are difficult to date; what follows is a tentative attempt to make sense of disparate bits and pieces of historical information. The date of Mauropous' consecration is disputed, some maintaining that it happened in the early reign of Monomachos, others preferring a date long after Monomachos.⁵⁸ These

⁵⁷ See for a similar case G. T. Dennis (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Orationes Forenses et Acta* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1994), 104–24 (no. II), at 116, 359–60: *οὐκ ἔννομον ἀνακαλέσασθαι μετὰ τὴν καθάρεισιν*.

⁵⁸ For a date in the late 1060s, see R. Anastasi, 'Michele Psello al metropolita di Euchaita (Epist. 34 pp. 53–6 K.-D.)', *Studi di Filologia Bizantina* 4 (1988) [= *Quaderni del Siculorum Gymnasium* 16], 105–20, and A. Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 87–111 (Kazhdan repeated his arguments in a sequel to this paper, 'Some Problems in the Biography of John Mauropous. II',

dates are incorrect. As Ljubarskij and Karpozilos proved beyond any reasonable doubt, letter KD 34, which Psellos rather hypocritically wrote to console Mauropous on what the latter saw as exile, refers to the Alan princess who became the mistress of Monomachos shortly before the death of Empress Zoe (†1050).⁵⁹ In other words, Mauropous was elected to the see of Euchaita in 1049, or perhaps 1050.⁶⁰ As I have translated this remarkable letter in the Appendix to this chapter, I shall refrain from further discussion.

In letter KD 33, Psellos complains that Mauropous does not reply to letters from his friends and refers in passing to the death of Mauropous' brother, who may have been the father of the nephew mentioned in letter KD 34 and other sources;⁶¹ unfortunately, the biographical data of this brother, including his death, cannot be established with absolute certainty.⁶² The fact that KD 33 is found next to KD 34 might suggest that it, too, dates from 1049–50, in which case Mauropous' letter 60 to Psellos could be considered to be a reply to it: in this letter Mauropous explains to Psellos in no uncertain terms why he does not feel the need to write to him. But the juxtaposition of letters in manuscript collections does not necessarily indicate that they date from the same period, nor are KD 33 and the possible reply to it (Mauropous 60) the only instances of estrangement—in fact, judging by their tumultuous correspondence, Psellos and Mauropous seem to have fallen out with each other quite regularly.

In letter S 173, a recommendation for an old man whom Mauropous is asked to support, Psellos complains that life at the court has become pretty

Byz 65 (1995), 362–87). For an equally unconvincing proposal to redate Mauropous' consecration, but this time to the very beginning of Monomachos' reign, see De Vries-van der Velden, 'Lune de Psellos', 239–56.

⁵⁹ See Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο*, 78–9 and n. 13; Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 39–41; Karpozilos, *Letters*, 17; and Karpozilos, 'The Biography of Ioannes Mauropous Again', *Hellenika* 44 (1994), 51–60. S. Chondridou, *Ο Κωνσταντίνος Θ' Μονομάχος και η εποχή του* (Thessaloniki, 2002), 237–40, at 238, n. 82, fails to understand that Karpozilos' interpretation of KD 34 excludes a date *after* the death of Empress Zoe. The traditional view that the 'moon' mentioned in KD 34 is Maria Skleraina (and not the Alan princess), still has its adherents: see E. Nardi, *Né sole né luna: l'immagine femminile nella Bisanzio dei secoli XI e XII* (Florence, 2002), 190–1.

⁶⁰ M. Angold, *The Byzantine Empire 1025–1204: A Political History* (Harlow, 1984), 46, dates Mauropous' exile one year earlier (1048) because he sees a link with the failure of Monomachos' policy toward the Pechenegs, of which Mauropous had been an advocate. Others such as Karpozilos, *Συμβολή*, 36–7, see a link with the dismissal of Constantine Leichoudes, which they think led to a wholesale campaign against 'the regime of the philosophers'; however, the date of Leichoudes' dismissal is unknown: it may have happened *after* (not before) Mauropous' election to the see of Euchaita, and the fact that Xiphilinos and Psellos retained their positions until 1054, renders the idea of a sustained campaign against these four luminaries rather unlikely.

⁶¹ See n. 31.

⁶² Mauropous certainly had two brothers, and perhaps more. In his *Encomium on John Mauropous* (ed. Dennis), 146.75–147.95 (translation: Anastasi, *Encomio per Giovanni*, 47), Psellos refers to a brother of Mauropous, who died at a tender age: this is clearly not the same brother mentioned in KD 33. Letter KD 47 is addressed to the *krites* of Kibyrraioton, the brother of the metropolitan of Euchaita: this could be the brother whose untimely death Psellos laments in KD 33, but this is not certain.

unbearable; Mauropous may not like his exile, but there is a fate worse than exile: not being exiled. The letter is likely to date from the period that Psellos' position at the court of Monomachos became insecure because of the growing opposition to him from Keroularios and other bigoted fundamentalists questioning his ethics, which eventually led him first to feign illness and then to don the habit.⁶³ Letter S 40 has a similar request as S 173, but it is not certain whether both refer to the same old man—but if they do, S 40, too, would date from c.1053–4.

In letter KD 54, Psellos is rambling on about sending his other self to Mauropous, namely the new *krites* of the Armeniakon theme; in a thought-provoking paper, Eva de Vries-van der Velden argued that Psellos is referring to his son-in-law, Basil Maleses, and that the appointment of Maleses as *krites* probably dates in the year 1059.⁶⁴ She also argued that the last paragraph of letter S 80 refers to the same *krites* who had apparently already assumed his duties—which would suggest a date in 1059 or not long thereafter.⁶⁵ Letter S 80 deals with an official complaint made by the inhabitants of Euchaita, who were less than pleased with Mauropous' conduct in ecclesiastical matters. The precise nature of the accusations lodged against Mauropous is far from clear, but the response to it is all too familiar to those who study the inner workings of the Byzantine imperial administration: instead of investigating whether there was any truth to the allegations, the emperor (Constantine X Doukas) listened to the impartial advice of Michael Psellos and expressed how mightily pleased he was with a letter sent to him by Mauropous.

In KD 45, Psellos reacts to rumours that Mauropous wishes to be relieved of his duties as metropolitan of Euchaita—well, he shouldn't: just as an athlete does not run away from the stadium nor a soldier from his ranks, so too a bishop does not abandon his flock, nor does he ask for early retirement. At the end of the letter Psellos expresses his wish that Mauropous 'not die "in premature old age" [Odyssey, 15.357], but neither (if one can say so) in thriving old age' and that 'he not die an octogenarian, but may reach the ultimate measure of human life, to which God has limited the number of thousand-year eras' [that is, seven].⁶⁶ In more mundane terms: Psellos wishes Mauropous a blessed old age and expresses his hope that he may reach the last and seventh

⁶³ See letter S 139, A. Garzya, 'On Michael Psellus' Admission of Faith', *EEBS* 35 (1966–67), 41–6, and *Chronographia*, VI, §191–9.

⁶⁴ E. de Vries-van der Velden, 'Psellos et son gendre', *BF* 23 (1996), 109–49, at 115–17.

⁶⁵ De Vries-van der Velden, 'Psellos et son gendre', 117.

⁶⁶ KD 45: 77.9–14. In the following lines (77.14–17) he quotes Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum* 415f (who, in his turn, refers to Plato's *Timaeus* 34c), according to whom the average life span is 54 (adding up the first number (1), the first two plane surfaces ($2 + 3 = 5$), the two squares ($2^2 + 3^2 = 4 + 9 = 13$) and the two cubes ($2^3 + 3^3 = 8 + 27 = 35$)); however, Psellos changes the text by stating that one should not count from the minimal numbers (1 and 2), but from the subsequent numbers (3 and 4): assuming that Psellos knows his arithmetic, this would mean that he expresses his hope that Mauropous may reach the age of 123 ($3 + 4 + 3^2 + 4^2 + 3^3 + 4^3$)!

stage of human existence. Such a wish only makes sense if Mauropous was well past his prime and already of advanced age. His date of birth is unknown, but as I shall argue elsewhere, Mauropous is likely to have been born in the first decade of the eleventh century. So a date for letter KD 45 of c.1060–70, when he was in his late fifties or early sixties, seems very plausible. In the next letter, KD 46, which was clearly written in the same period, Psellos writes that friendship must not always be measured by results, because there are none to report on his part; however, good intentions do count for something. Although his ‘axe’ (his rhetorical talents and political clout) is sharp and ready, it cannot cut everything: therefore, he cannot comply with Mauropous’ request. However, since the emperor is easily persuaded, it is just a matter of patiently awaiting the time when his defences are down and he is in the mood to honour any request. This weak and indecisive emperor, who eagerly listened to sweet-talking Psellos whenever he was in a good mood, is probably Constantine X Doukas (see the *Summaries*).

It must have been these kinds of vague promises that drove Mauropous insane: the subtle lies, the subterfuges, the inane excuses. While it was no secret to anyone what Mauropous desired, Psellos would always come up with some lame excuse why he really thought that his beloved teacher should stay in Euchaita. A sense of betrayal was inevitable. It is already there in the poignant letter sent by an obviously angered Mauropous shortly after his appointment (no. 51), which reads as an indictment of Constantinopolitan hypocrisy and corruption in general and a direct attack on Psellos in particular, culminating in the suggestion that Psellos might be bribed into overturning the imperial decision to make Mauropous metropolitan of Euchaita. The last act in this evolving melodrama is Psellos’ *Encomium on John Mauropous*, declaimed in or shortly after 1075 in the very presence of John Mauropous, in which Psellos had the temerity to tell him that he should return to his episcopal see and abandon his monastic vocation.⁶⁷ In this remarkably tactless document, Psellos repeated the same arguments he had used in KD 45: bishops do not abandon their flocks unless they are physically unable to attend to the needs of the faithful or have a genuine religious calling. So, if we are to believe Psellos, Mauropous was as spry as ever, despite his ripe old age, and was just pretending to have religious inclinations.⁶⁸ To top it all, Psellos reminded Mauropous that Euchaita was a rich city, with many inhabitants and a good deal of money to be made.⁶⁹ Mantzikert and all that cannot possibly have escaped Psellos’ notice; he must have known that Euchaita was in need of urgent help in dealing with a number of issues: refugees from the eastern borders, devastation of the

⁶⁷ For Mauropous’ presence, see the *Encomium* (ed. Dennis), lines 30–44, 186–92, and 756–63; tr. Anastasi, *Encomio*, 45–6, 49, and 64.

⁶⁸ See the *Encomium* (ed. Dennis), lines 764–819; tr. Anastasi, *Encomio*, 64–6.

⁶⁹ See the *Encomium* (ed. Dennis), lines 820–844; tr. Anastasi, *Encomio*, 66.

countryside, collapse of the rural economy, etc.⁷⁰ And yet, according to Psellos, Mauropous should be thrilled to return to wealthy and carefree Euchaita.

Letter KD 105 is related to the period after the episcopate, when Mauropous had become a monk, despite all the warnings of Psellos that he should not abandon his post, but remain in office. This explains the condescending, slightly ironic undertone of this message, which questions the ethics of monasticism, lofty and divine in appearance, but downright greedy in practice. This is what Psellos, with his usual irony, has to say about Mauropous' monastic vocation: 'The very same things I used to blame you for [read: in the *Encomium* and private conversations], now provide ample material for praise' (135.17–19)—though, what precedes and follows, is hardly 'praise'. KD 105 is clearly a response to a previous letter from Mauropous. Psellos focuses on two separate issues: if Mauropous is a true monk and abstains from worldly goods, why is he interested in the proceeds of the harvest? And if Mauropous is a true monk and interested in spirituality only, why does he praise Psellos for his beautiful epistolographic style? It is obvious that Mauropous in his previous message had praised Psellos' literary talents and had asked him for help with a fiscal matter related to the fields of his monastery. It is also obvious that when Psellos wrote this reply, he was seriously annoyed with Mauropous for not listening to his good advice and embracing monastic life. All in all, a date not long after the *Encomium on John Mauropous* is probably not far off the mark.

This leaves us with letters S 202 and S 203 (=Sp 1). S 202 is a letter by Mauropous to Psellos and S 203 is Psellos' reply to it (*ἀντίγραμμα*).⁷¹ It is interesting to see how Psellos picks up certain catchwords of Mauropous' letter, plays with them, elaborates upon them and develops them in his own unique way. Take, for instance, the use of the word *φωστῆρες* ('beacons', 'luminaries') in both letters. In S 202 Mauropous replies to a previous letter from Psellos, in which the latter had apparently compared the former first to one of the prophets and then to one of the ancient philosophers. Mauropous is delighted to see that Psellos puts these two 'luminaries', though quite different, on one level and dares to blend heaven and earth and mix the religious with the secular. In S 203, Psellos replies to Mauropous' compliments which he finds excessive, and tells him that friendship is blind: Mauropous cannot see straight because he is Psellos' friend. Psellos meanwhile has the feeling that he

⁷⁰ For the situation in the eastern parts of the Byzantine Empire after 1071, see J.-C. Cheynet, 'La résistance aux Turcs en Asie Mineure entre Mantzikert et la Première Croisade', in *Εὐρυχία. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler*, 2 vols (Paris, 1998), I, 131–47, and J.-C. Cheynet, 'L'Asie Mineure d'après la correspondance de Psellos', *BF* 25 (1999), 233–41.

⁷¹ Sathas offers only the beginning of S 203 from an incomplete manuscript; for the full text, see M. D. Spadaro, 'Un' epistola di incerta attribuzione (No. 202 Sathas) ed una semiedita (No. 203 Sathas)', *JÖB* 30 (1981), 157–67, at 166–7. Spadaro is not convinced that S 203 is a reply to S 202—but it is beyond doubt that the postscriptums of S 202 and 203 are directly related: see the main text.

is caught between two blinding ‘beacons of light’ (the divine light and Mauropous’ intellectual light). In both letters there is much talk of philosophy and elevated concepts, though in the end it all boils down to feelings of mutual admiration and friendship. Mauropous’ letter has a P.S.: ‘The wool blankets and the pair of felt shoes have been sent to you’, and Psellos replies (also in a P.S.): ‘Thanks to the presents I will be fine this winter’. Since Psellos, in letter S 203, explicitly refers to the *Chronographia*, even suggesting that Mauropous might become one of its characters,⁷² the letter obviously dates either from the period when Psellos wrote books I–VII (completed in c.1060) or when he wrote book VII, a–c (left incomplete in 1074 or shortly thereafter).⁷³ And seeing that the letter does not address Mauropous as metropolitan of Euchaita, it must date from the second period of composition. The idea that these two good friends, despite all their bickering and nagging, would send each other little presents so as to make life a bit more bearable in their remaining years, is touching and endearing.

∴

Ranke’s heavy shadow—the quest for ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’—still hovers over Byzantine studies.⁷⁴ And the reason for this is that it is easy to question the factuality of facts if there are enough ‘facts’ in the first place—just as it is easy to diet in a well-stocked kitchen, whereas dieting is probably the last thing on one’s mind when the shelves are empty. The correspondence of Psellos and Mauropous has so many gaping lacunas and offers so little certainty that any reconstruction of what really happened between these two (‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’) is doomed to fail. And taking into account that their letters construct a discursive universe of friendship and love, the best thing to do is probably to study them as evidence for the way social networks are established and maintained in the eleventh century.⁷⁵ Or alternatively one could analyse the rhetoric of friendship in the way Karlsson did: the *topoi*, the hackneyed

⁷² Spadaro (see n. 71), 167.41–552, esp. line 44. Please note that John Mauropous appears only once, and then obliquely, in the *Chronographia*, VI, §192. For a similar reference to the *Chronographia* in the letters of Psellos, see letter S 108, which dates from 1057.

⁷³ See D. R. Reinsch, ‘Wie und wann ist der uns überlieferte Text der *Chronographia* des Michael Psellos entstanden?’, *MEG* 13 (2013), 209–22, and A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι. Τόμος Γ’ (11ος–12ος αι.)* (Athens, 2009), 79–84.

⁷⁴ See E. de Vries-van der Velden, ‘The Letters of Michael Psellos, Historical Knowledge and the Writing of History’, in W. Hörandner and M. Grünbart (eds), *L’ épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique* (Paris, 2003), 121–35.

⁷⁵ See Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid*; E. Limousin, ‘Les lettrés en société: «φίλος βίος» ou «πολιτικός βίος»’, *Byz* 79 (1999), 344–65; S. Papaioannou, ‘Letter-Writing’, in P. Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine World* (London; New York, 2010), 188–99.

imagery, the stilted and formal phraseology.⁷⁶ There is little doubt that literary theory would feast upon the lavish banquet offered by authors, such as Mauropous and Psellos, whose literary works at times look disconcertingly postmodern. And yet the urge for the actual and the tangible cannot be denied: it is what defines Byzantine scholarship. We want to know more, even if ‘more’ is a mere fiction, a concept rather than a reality, a statue without a pedestal. To quote Eva de Vries-van der Velden, ‘We have to admit that in any representation of the past the force of imagination plays a role no less important than systematic thinking.’ But she continues by saying that realizing this should not ‘keep us from practising history’.⁷⁷

In the following I shall discuss Mauropous’ letter 23 and Psellos’ reply to it, M 12 (=G 33); for a translation, see the Appendix to this chapter. To understand these two letters, we need factual information. Although, as stated, the epistemological status of facts is debatable and reliable information is difficult to come by anyhow, I do think texts have a reality-based ‘hors-texte’. It should be recognized, however, that in philological matters, as in any other aspect of life, certainty is not always possible and that modesty therefore befits the Psellian scholar.

In 1047, the same year that John Xiphilinos was appointed head of the newly founded School of Law (*nomophylax*),⁷⁸ Constantine (later Michael) Psellos became *consul of the philosophers* (*ὑπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων*).⁷⁹ The question is whether this was an honorary title or a newly created office, and if so, what duties and responsibilities it entailed. Our main source is the *History* of Michael Attaleiates, where we read that the emperor, after his victories over rebels and Russians, enjoyed peace of mind and turned his attention to domestic affairs: namely, the creation of a new department under the *epi ton kriseon*, the creation of the School of Law and the appointment of a *nomophylax*, and the creation of Psellos’ ‘consulship’. This is what he writes: ‘But he also took care of the divine discipline of philosophy by

⁷⁶ G. Karlsson, *Idéologie et cérémonial dans l’ épistolographie byzantine* (Uppsala, 1959).

⁷⁷ De Vries-van der Velden, ‘The Letters of Michael Psellos’, 135.

⁷⁸ See W. Conus-Wolska, ‘Les écoles de Psellos et de Xiphilin sous Constantin IX Monomaque’, *TM* 6 (1976), 223–43; eadem, ‘L’ école de droit et l’ enseignement du droit au XI^e siècle. Xiphilin et Psellos’, *TM* 7 (1979), 1–107; Angold, *The Byzantine Empire*, 39–45; M. Th. Fögen, ‘Modell und Mythos: Die Rechtsfakultäten von Konstantinopel, Neapel und Bologna im Mittelalter’, *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 15 (1996), 181–204, at 182–6.

⁷⁹ For most of the following, see the classic study by Paul Lemerle, ‘Le gouvernement des philosophes»: l’ enseignement, les écoles, la culture’, in *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 195–248. For the date (1047), see Lefort, ‘Rhétorique et politique’, 279–80; please note that the position of no. 23 in the letter collection of Mauropous, only three letters before no. 26 which dates from late 1047, confirms this dating. Michael Jeffreys (see the *Summaries*, excursus 9, and n. 22) assumes that Psellos was made *πρόεδρος τῶν φιλοσόφων* in 1047 and *ὑπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων* in the early 1050s; in my view we are dealing with one and the same title, and contrary to Jeffreys, I would date S 155, KD 198, and M 7, in which Psellos refers to himself as *proedros*, to the reign of Isaac Komnenos when he was made ‘proedros of the senate’; see also n. 84.

appointing a man who excels above all others in knowledge as “head of the philosophers” (πρόεδρος τῶν φιλοσόφων) and he encouraged young people to apply themselves to learning and letters by providing them with teachers and honouring their performances in public declamation with imperial prizes.⁸⁰ The title is sporadically found in contemporary sources, the most important of which is a report by Patriarch Keroularios, which mentions the presence of Constantine *vestarches* and *consul of the philosophers* in 1054.⁸¹ It is also found in headings attached to some of Psellos’ writings, but not as frequently as one would expect.⁸² To my knowledge, Psellos himself mentions the title only once, and that is in the court memorandum he wrote regarding the engagement of his daughter, which dates from August 1056, but refers to events that took place in 1054–5.⁸³ However, as this curious document purports to be a memorandum that emanated from the tribunal and hence refers to Psellos in the third person as one of the parties in the case, Psellos somehow distances himself from its contents. So, in the only text in which he refers to himself as ‘consul of the philosophers’, he is not even speaking in his own voice, but echoes what others are saying.⁸⁴ The question is why Psellos refrained from discussing the topic of his ‘consulship’. After all, he had ample opportunity to mention it in the many passages of the *Chronographia* and other writings that deal with his favourite subject: how Michael Psellos single-handedly revived the study of philosophy and rhetoric,⁸⁵ played a leading role in the cultural life

⁸⁰ I. Pérez Martín (ed.), *Miguel Atalíates: Historia* (Madrid, 2002), 17.18–24. The meaning of *σὺν τῷ εὐμαρεῖ τῶν διδασκάλων* is obscure. Does it refer to teachers in general: ‘facilitando su labor con profesores’ (Pérez Martín), ‘par la facilité que leur procuraient les didascales’ (Lemerle), ‘mettant à leur dispositions des professeurs experts’ (Gautier), ‘by providing them with teachers’ (Lauxtermann)? Or to Psellos and Xiphilinos in particular: ‘en plus de la commodité des maîtres’ (Riedinger), ‘under the skillful guidance of their teachers’ (Kaldellis and Krallis)? Or only to Psellos: ‘zusammen mit dem befähigten Lehrer’ (Weiss), ‘υπό τὴν καθοδήγηση τοῦ ἱκανοῦ τοῦ διδασκάλου’ (Polemis), ‘avec ce maître qui rendait tout facile’ (Limousin)? In the last interpretation *τῷ εὐμαρεῖ* is the dative not of *τὸ εὐμαρές* (=ἡ εὐμάρεια), but of *ὁ εὐμαρής*.

⁸¹ See Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 224–5.

⁸² For instance, D. J. O’Meara (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Philosophica Minora* (Leipzig, 1989), vol. 2, 155 (no. 44) and L. G. Westerink and J. M. Duffy (eds), *Michaelis Pselli Theologica* (Stuttgart; Leipzig, 2002), vol. 2, 17 (no. 3).

⁸³ See D. Jenkins, ‘The Court Memorandum’, in A. Kaldellis (ed.), *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters: The Byzantine family of Michael Psellos* (Notre Dame, 2006), 139–56, at 148.

⁸⁴ According to Riedinger, ‘Quatre étapes’, 44, Psellos refers to his promotion to ‘head of the philosophers’ (*proedros*) in M 7 (=G 30), a letter to Xiphilinos; but the letter leaves no doubt that Xiphilinos is a monk (πάτερ) in the Horaia Pege monastery (πηγῆς in line 1): see Gautier, ‘Quelques lettres’, 183, n. 2. It is not known when Xiphilinos retired to the monastery: Gautier, ‘Éloge funèbre de Nicolas de la Belle Source’, 16–22, assumes that he took the habit not long before Psellos, in 1054; Michael Jeffreys thinks that his retirement happened earlier, between c.1049 and 1052 (see the *Summaries*). Since M 7 dates from after 1054 (Gautier) or 1049–52 (Jeffreys), it cannot refer to his appointment as consul of the philosophers in 1047; it probably refers to his appointment as ‘head of the senate’ (*proedros*) in 1057.

⁸⁵ See J. Duffy, ‘Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium and the Lonely Mission of Michael Psellos’, in K. Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources* (Oxford, 2002), 139–56.

of the capital, and gave advice to emperors on important state matters. I think silence speaks volumes here. If he does not mention the ‘consulship’, it is probably because it was not as important to him as it is to modern scholarship.⁸⁶

The text most often quoted in modern scholarship is the *Encomium on John Xiphilinos*, a funeral oration written long after the event (in or after 1075).⁸⁷ The key to understanding this difficult text is, I think, Psellos’ apology for talking for the umpteenth time about himself: ‘If I too shall partake of the following account, either in the encomiastic or in the narrative passages, let no one take offence—for I do not mix my own stories in with his [Xiphilinos’] on purpose, but because the account itself forces me to do so’ (§5.20–2). Psellos’ problem was that, according to the rules of the art, his encomium needed to touch upon Xiphilinos’ pursuits in life, including his election to the post of *nomophylax*. This, however, meant that he would have to discuss legal education under Monomachos and, perhaps, even discuss Xiphilinos’ contribution to Byzantine culture in general—whereas his was so much more important! So, what he did instead was create the impression that it was impossible to speak about Xiphilinos without Psellos, and suggest that there was such an intimacy and closeness between the two of them that it would be perverse to see them as anything else than a Siamese twin, separated at birth, but still maintaining a symbiotic life form. It is this rhetorical discourse of togetherness and apartness that leads to bizarre statements and non-sequiturs, such as the following: ‘So, testing each other and measuring our strengths in subjects in which we were equally good or the one had an advantage over the other, in unison as always, we were carved up into segments that were both joined and separated’ (§10.1–3), or ‘Thus, a shared interest in learning having brought us together in common pursuits, we were then split up—we were, so to speak, taken apart and pieced together into a form of incongruous congruity’ (§10.32–5). It is clear what Psellos is after: as always, he adroitly juggles with concepts and plays around with words, dancing the tightrope of sophistry. However, the whole nonsense of being together while apart or being apart in togetherness should not be taken at face value, nor should it be used as evidence that the *nomophylax* and the consul of the philosophers were employed at one and the same institution of higher education, while divided over two different departments: the School of Law and the School of Philosophy. In fact, there is not a shred of evidence for the existence of a School of Philosophy, nor, for that matter, for the existence of a fully functioning ‘University’.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 224: ‘On a beaucoup écrit sur ce titre d’hypatos des philosophes, ordinairement en exagérant à l’excès son importance.’

⁸⁷ I. Polemis (ed.), *Michael Psellus: Orationes funebres, vol. I* (Berlin-Boston, 2014), 115–69 (no. 3).

⁸⁸ As rightly pointed out by G. Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973), 65–76.

As I find myself broadly in agreement with Paul Lemerle's interpretation of the *Encomium on John Xiphilinos*,⁸⁹ I will be brief. In the *Encomium*, Psellos recounts how the emperor, Constantine IX Monomachos, believed in meritocratic principles, opened the senate to new talent and surrounded himself with the brightest minds of his era, among whom were Psellos and Xiphilinos (§8.1–17). Before being admitted into the imperial service, Psellos had to pass through various tests (§8.17–23)—as Riedinger points out, this refers to his appointment as secretary of the chancellery (*ἀσηκροῦτης*) in 1043.⁹⁰ Xiphilinos joined the imperial tribunal, initially as an ordinary judge and not yet as its president (§9.1–5)—please note that the imperial *Νεαρά* by which Xiphilinos was installed as *nomophylax* in 1047, calls him an *exaktor* and judge of the Hippodrome.⁹¹ Having discussed their respective appointments, Psellos then paints a grim picture of the educational standards in the pre-Pselian period (§10.4–22). There were chairs and contests, but there was no true excellence, nor were there intellectuals who surpassed the rest in knowledge and excelled in every area of the sciences and the arts (Mauroπους will have been pleased to read these comments from his pupil). This changed when Psellos and Xiphilinos had acquired a reputation for their learning. Students interested in a career in the imperial administration flocked around Xiphilinos who taught them Roman law, while students with higher aspirations and philosophical interests were drawn to the charismatic Psellos (§10.22–7). 'So, what did the emperor do next? (*τί δ' ἐπὶ τούτοις ὁ βασιλεύς;*)' (§10.27–8). The emperor had to give in to the demands of the students and was forced to part with his two loyal servants, who were not eager to leave his service either. Psellos taught philosophy and rhetoric, Xiphilinos law—but contrary to their job descriptions, they also taught each other's topics (§10.28–44). It is clear that this passage deals with the nomination of Xiphilinos as *nomophylax* and Psellos as consul of the philosophers in 1047. 'But then, what happened? (*ἀλλ' ὅποια τὰ ἐπὶ τούτοις;*)' (§10.44). The emperor regretted his decision and called them back into his service. 'They became for him what they had been for others',

⁸⁹ Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 203–6. For various other interpretations, see R. Anastasi, 'Filosofia e techne a Bisanzio nell' XI secolo', *Sicilorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 27 (1974), 352–86, at 352–3, n. 3; R. Anastasi, 'A proposito di un recente libro su Psello', *ibid.*, 387–420, at 390–4; R. Anastasi, 'L' Università a Bisanzio nell' XI secolo', *Sicilorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 32 (1979), 351–78, at 362–77; Wolska-Conus, 'Les écoles de Psellos et Xiphilinos', 225–8 and 242–3; Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes', 37–47; M. D. Spadaro, 'Le *humanae litterae* da Basilio II a Costantino IX Monomacho', *Νέα Ρώμη* 8 (2011), 107–28, at 117–22.

⁹⁰ Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes', 30–7. Psellos' rise to fame was less rapid than usually assumed: see, for instance, the end of panegyric no. 2 (Dennis (ed.), *Orationes Panegyricae*, 49.799–50.825; cf. P. Gautier, 'Basilikoi Logoi inédites de Michel Psellos', *Sicilorum Gymnasium*, n.s., 33 (1980), 717–71, at 719–21), pronounced in April or May 1043, in which he complains that *οἱ τῆς γνώσεως πρόφιμοι* deserve to be rewarded for their literary works, each according to their merits.

⁹¹ A. Salač, *Novella constitutio saec: XI medii quae est de schola juris Constantinopoli constituenda et legum custode creando, a Ioanne Mauropode conscripta, a Constantino IX Monomacho promulgata* (Prague, 1954), §8.

Psellos instructing him in rhetoric mixed with a bit of philosophy and Xiphilinos initiating him into the secrets of Roman law (§10.44–50). This is then followed by the famous anecdote that the emperor would sit in on Psellos' classes and take notes, because he wished to emulate Marcus Aurelius (§11.3–9). The rest of the *Encomium* is not important for the present purpose.

As we see, Psellos' account of Xiphilinos' and his careers in the educational system is structured around two key moments: the emperor sends them away and the emperor calls them back. So one can distinguish three stages in Psellos' account: the period before they left the emperor's service; the period when they were 'hired out as mercenaries' (§10.46–7) to the students; and the period after their return to the emperor's service. In all three stages they are explicitly said to be teaching, but it is only in the middle stage, when they were not in the emperor's service, that they appear to have been employed in schools, Xiphilinos as *nomophylax*, Psellos as consul of the philosophers. The first stage roughly coincides with the years 1043–7, when Psellos was employed as imperial *asekretis* and Xiphilinos as judge; in this period both offered private lessons to students in their spare time. Their appointments to professorial chairs can be dated to 1047, but it is not known how long the second stage lasted; however, seeing that Xiphilinos' appointment was widely criticized by other notaries and judges,⁹² it may have ended fairly soon. As far as we know, Psellos' election to the chair of philosophy did not encounter similar criticisms, but the *Encomium* leaves no doubt that he too was called back, after which he resumed his duties in the imperial administration. The third stage, that of their return to the palace, ended in the 1050s, when first Xiphilinos and then Psellos (in 1054) donned the habit and retreated to Mount Olympos in Bithynia. In the pre-1054 period, just as in the years 1043–7, Psellos and Xiphilinos offered private lessons in their off-hours—and if we are to believe Psellos, one of the persons who attended his classes in this period, was none less than the emperor himself.

Since Psellos bore the title of 'consul of the philosophers' in 1054 (and also later in his life), that is, *after* his tenure of the chair of philosophy, it is reasonable to assume that when he ceased to be employed in the Byzantine school system, he retained the title and, probably, also his stipends.

However, in 1047 it was more than just a dignity: the title was given to Psellos as holder of the chair of philosophy. To the best of my knowledge, apart from M 12 (see later in this section), there are three references to this chair in Psellos' vast correspondence: KD 225 τοῦ τῆς φιλοσοφίας θρόνου (268.12),⁹³ S 189

⁹² Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 84–6; Wolska-Conus, 'L' école de droit', *passim*; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 211–12.

⁹³ I fail to understand why Kazhdan, 'Some Problems', 99–100, speculates that this could be a letter to Mauropous, whereas, in fact, it addresses a fellow intellectual who had expressed a wish to make the acquaintance of Psellos when the latter held the professorial chair, that is, in 1047 or later.

ὁ σοφιστικὸς θρόνος (481.16), and S 16 οὐ γὰρ φιλοσόφων, ᾧ ἴαθέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥητόρων, ὡς οἶσθα, προκάθημαι (256.12–13); none of these letters can be dated with certainty.⁹⁴ There are numerous references to students, classes, and teaching materials in the various writings of Psellos,⁹⁵ but the problem is that none of these can be tied down to a specific period in his long career, because as we have already seen, Psellos taught both publicly as a professor and privately as a high-ranking civil servant. However, there is one text that puts him squarely in a school environment, and that is Psellos' *Monody on Niketas the Maistor of the School of St Peter*.⁹⁶ This is a brilliant and moving portrait of a fellow student, whom Psellos met in adolescence. Niketas was interested in grammar and orthography, Psellos in philosophy: they joined forces, but went their separate ways (this is the same pattern of being together and yet apart that we saw in the *Encomium on Xiphilinos*, the difference being that here it rings true). Niketas' exceptional talents as a grammarian were soon recognized by the Constantinopolitan students, who demanded that he be transferred to a teaching post (§4.9–11), which led to his appointment as an assistant teacher, 'not because of the outcome of his assessment, but on account of the regulations: in fact, it would have been fair and just if he had been given the chair, but the law did not allow for it' (§5.1–3); in due time, however, Niketas became so popular among students of rhetoric and philosophy that he was promoted to the professorial chair at the very school where he was already teaching (§6.24–9): in other words, he was first a *proximos* and then a *maistor* at the school of St Peter. It is at this point in his account that Psellos quite unexpectedly returns to his favourite subject: himself. He states that fate once again brought them together because they were both employed at the same school, Niketas holding the chair of orthography (=grammar) and Psellos the chair of philosophy (τὸν τῆς φιλοσοφίας θρόνον); Niketas was teaching the beginners, Psellos the students that were more advanced (§6.29–37). The rest of the monody need not concern us here.

It is unusual for a Byzantine school to have more than one *θρόνος*; schools may have assistant teachers, but there is only one *maistor*.⁹⁷ Only in exceptional cases, such as the school of Magnaura founded by Bardas Caesar or the school founded by Constantine VII, are there more chairs.⁹⁸ The Magnaura

⁹⁴ Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes', 42, n. 143, assumes that G 21 (170.65–6) refers to the chair of philosophy, but this letter is addressed to Constantine the nephew of Keroularios when the latter was *protoproedros* and *epi ton kriseon*, that is, in the 1070s, and it refers to Psellos' promotion to a high post (*kouropalates*?) in 1078: see Chapter 4.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 2. See also Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 214–21, and A. Kaldellis, 'The Date of Psellos' Theological Lectures and Higher Religious Education in Constantinople', *BSI* 63 (2005), 143–52.

⁹⁶ Polemis, *Orationes funebres*, 170–9 (no. 4). See Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 201–2.

⁹⁷ See P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), 242–66; P. Speck, *Die kaiserliche Universität von Konstantinopel* (Munich, 1974), 29–39.

⁹⁸ On these two schools, see Lemerle, *Premier humanisme*, 158–60 and 263–6; Speck, *Kaiserliche Universität*, 4–7 and 64–5.

school and the one founded by Constantine VII were public institutions, but private initiatives: they offered secondary education at the highest level, under the supervision of competent and inspiring teachers and with free tuition, but they depended on the generosity of emperors or members of the imperial family, who had a genuine interest in learning and letters—and that is why these schools disappeared from the radar once their benefactors had died. The school of St Peter appears to be another educational institution receiving imperial subvention: not only did it have two chairs rather than just the one, but it also had the most distinguished scholar of the time, Psellos, whom the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos had honoured with a special distinction, the title of consul of the philosophers. In contrast to the Magnaura school and the school of Constantine VII, St Peter's was not another short-lived initiative. It survived at least until the twelfth century. However, it is clear from the historical sources that in the later eleventh century it fell under the direction of the patriarch, not the emperor.⁹⁹ That it had changed hands between the reigns of Monomachos and Alexios Komnenos, becomes abundantly clear from S 162, a letter Psellos wrote on behalf of the *maïstor* of the Diakonissa school. In this letter to the patriarch, the *maïstor* requested to be transferred to a higher position, namely the chair of the school of St Peter. This letter is generally believed to date from the period when Psellos himself had the chair of philosophy at St Peter's,¹⁰⁰ but it is not clear why this should be the case: surely, a date closer to the Comnenian period when the patriarchate had become solely responsible for the school system,¹⁰¹ is more plausible than a date during the reign of the most education-minded emperor of the eleventh century.

This leaves us with one final question. In the period that Psellos was employed at the school of St Peter as consul of the philosophers, did he also have other duties? Was he a kind of school superintendent and was supervision over the *maïstores* of the other schools in Constantinople one of his

⁹⁹ See Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 231–3; Speck, *Kaiserliche Universität*, 67–8.

¹⁰⁰ Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 230–1 and 242–3, and many others. See later in this chapter for the analysis of Mauropous no. 23, from which it results that in 1047 the school of St Peter fell under the emperor's, not the patriarch's jurisdiction.

¹⁰¹ For the Comnenian system and its prehistory, see V. Katsaros, 'Προδρομικοί «θεσμοί» για την οργάνωση της ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης της εποχής των Κομνηνών από την προκομνηνεία περίοδο', in *The Empire in Crisis (?): Byzantium in the 11th Century (1025–1081)* (Athens, 2003), 443–71 (with further references to the vast bibliography on this subject). Letter S 162 has come down to us in five manuscripts: three without an explicit addressee and two which identify the patriarch as Keroularios (Athen. Benaki TA 250) and Leichoudes (Vind. Theol. gr. 160), respectively: see Papaioannou, 'Fragile Literature', 304, n. 50. Patriarch Leichoudes (1059–63) could very well be the addressee, but since the identification is not supported by the other four manuscripts, it is not beyond doubt. If Keroularios is the patriarch meant, I would date the letter to the last year of his patriarchate, 1057–58, when Isaac I Komnenos had ceded many rights and prerogatives to the Great Church, including perhaps the supervision of the school system. But this identification, too, is not certain.

responsibilities? It is certainly possible, but there is no proof for it.¹⁰² In S 168, a letter to the *maistor* of the Chalkoprateia school, Psellos criticizes this *maistor* for returning the gratuity he had received, because he deemed it to be too small an amount of money; the term used is τὰ ἀργυρὰ τοῦ κλητώριον. In the two other places, where the word is attested in Psellos, κλητώριον clearly indicates the offices of the chancellery where the secretaries fulfilled their duties.¹⁰³ If it has the same meaning here, the gratuity is likely to have been distributed by Psellos in his capacity as imperial *asekretis* (or perhaps *protasekretis*)¹⁰⁴ rather than consul of the philosophers.¹⁰⁵

After considerable detours through the omnifarious works of Psellos, for which I unreservedly apologize, but without which it would not be possible to understand letters 23 of Mauropous and M 12 (=G 33) of Psellos, I now return to my actual subject. The first to suggest that Psellos' letter M 12 is a direct reply to Mauropous' letter 23 was the great Psellian scholar, Paul Gautier: 'Aurions-nous ici la lettre de remerciement de Psellos? Ce point mériterait un examen approfondi.'¹⁰⁶ Gautier was not only the first, but apparently also the last scholar to establish a link between these two letters, although it is crystal clear that they are related.¹⁰⁷ Even without an 'examen approfondi', it stands to reason that a letter in which Mauropous expresses his hope that Psellos will obtain the 'professorial chair' and a letter in which Psellos thanks Mauropous for writing a letter in support of his candidacy to the 'chair of philosophy' must be connected. There are not that many chairs in Byzantium and there are not that many moments when Psellos hoped to obtain a professorial chair. Psellos was a courtier, not a professor; he was interested in politics, not academia.

¹⁰² The Life of St Athanasios the Athonite mentions the post of *προκαθήμενος τῶν παιδευτηρίων*: see Lemerle, *Premier humanisme*, 258; Speck, *Kaiserliche Universität*, 43–5. At the beginning of the third panegyric (Dennis (ed.), *Orationes Panegyricae*, 51.7–11), Psellos mentions the presence of τῆς σοφίας καθηγεμόν: is this the 'president' of the literary *theatron*, or the head of the educational system?

¹⁰³ A. R. Littlewood (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Oratoria Minora* (Leipzig, 1985), 46.85 (no. 11); Dennis (ed.), *Orationes Panegyricae*, 182 (heading of no. 20). This meaning is not attested elsewhere; it has also escaped the notice of the editors of the *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, s.v. κλητώριον, who only give the usual meaning: 'reception; banquet'.

¹⁰⁴ According to Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes', 47–9, the heading of *Oratoria Minora* (ed. Littlewood), no. 8, which is the only source to mention Psellos as *protasekretis*, has been misinterpreted by Gautier and Lemerle: ὅτε παρητήσατο τὴν τοῦ πρωτοασκηρήτις ἀξίαν does not mean 'when he resigned his post as *protasekretis*', but 'when he refused the post of *protasekretis*'. However, contrary to what Riedinger peremptorily states, the verb *παραιτοῦμαι* does have the meaning of 'to resign' in later Greek.

¹⁰⁵ See Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 72–3; Wolska-Conus, 'Les écoles de Psellos et Xiphilin', 231–3; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 225–7.

¹⁰⁶ Gautier, 'Quelques lettres', 189, n. 7. See Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 223, n. 57^{bis}.

¹⁰⁷ There are no studies of M 12 (=G 33). Mauropous no. 23 has been analysed by Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 69–71; Wolska-Conus, 'Les écoles de Psellos et de Xiphilin', 228–9; Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 221–3; Karpozilos, *Letters*, 219–20; Riedinger, 'Quatre étapes', 43–4.

In letter 23, Mauropous recounts how he just had a visit from Psellos' students, who had come to plead with the great man to support the nomination of their teacher for the professorial chair—seeing that Mauropous calls these students 'the holy chorus of divine philosophy', it is reasonable to assume that this is the chair of philosophy. It is worth noting that the students play an active role in Psellos' nomination and intervene on his behalf. There is an obvious parallel here to the *Encomium on John Xiphilinos*, where the active participation of the students is even more striking: according to the *Encomium*, the initiative lay entirely with the students without any involvement of Psellos and Xiphilinos, who, like the emperor, were rather reluctant to give in to their demands. Students were a force to reckon with, firstly because teachers depended upon them for their salaries and secondly because the number of students in attendance enhanced the prestige of schools and teachers. In the case of Psellos, things are a bit different because these were not regular students, but young people attending the extracurricular classes he offered in his spare time. They were the members of his literary coterie, his *theatron*, his chorus—and he was their chorus-leader. In panegyric no. 6, dating from not long after 1045,¹⁰⁸ Psellos complained to the emperor that he had not yet been rewarded for all his contributions to Byzantine education, specifically in the domains of philosophy and rhetoric, and as living proof of this, he pointed to his students, who were apparently sitting in a half circle around him—thus clearly suggesting that this demand for remuneration was not just his request, but also theirs.¹⁰⁹ In a way, Psellos' students functioned as a pressure group.

Another parallel to what Psellos writes in the *Encomium on John Xiphilinos* is the emphasis on educational decline. Byzantium has become an intellectual wasteland, suffering from 'a drought of knowledge and learning', and philosophy is 'in danger of disappearing altogether'. This is clearly the main argument used in support of Psellos' candidacy.

There are two parties that need to be convinced that Psellos is indeed the best candidate: 'the imperial authority' and 'the other students, those who are now applying themselves to letters and learning'. As Lemerle's *Le premier humanisme* has convincingly demonstrated, in the tenth century teachers needed the support of the students and school assistants in order to be appointed to chairs—and after the students had decided whom they would like as their new *maïstor*, their choice needed to be confirmed and ratified by the emperor.¹¹⁰ Letter 23 of Mauropous indicates that little had changed since then: it is still the students' vote and the emperor's approval that are decisive in

¹⁰⁸ The date provided by the editor, 1045–50, should be narrowed down to 1045–7.

¹⁰⁹ Dennis (ed.), *Orationes Panegyricae*, 98.261–99.292.

¹¹⁰ See Lemerle, *Premier humanisme*, 258–60. Speck, *Kaiserliche Universität*, 37–9, argues that the choice the students and school assistants make is not confirmed by the emperor himself, but by the city eparch.

electing a candidate to the professorial chair.¹¹¹ It is also clear that the school of St Peter, where Psellos was to hold the chair of philosophy, did not yet fall under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate; it was the emperor who decided, not the patriarch. As for the reference to ‘the other students’, instead of students in general, it is worth remembering that the school of St Peter was an unusual school in that it had two chairs: a chair of orthography/grammar and a chair of philosophy. Psellos already had the support of the students interested in philosophy and rhetoric; what he needed was the consent of the ‘other students’, those who were less advanced, plodding through the basics of Greek orthography and slogging away at grammar exercises.

As rightly observed by Lemerle, the last paragraph of Mauropous’ letter seems to suggest that ‘Mauropous ne doute pas que son appui mette toutes les chances du côté de Psellos: à lui maintenant d’agir’.¹¹² This is not just Lemerle’s impression; this is exactly how Psellos interpreted Mauropous’ letter. In his response, M 12 (=G 33), he compares the letter to the Pythian oracle, but then decides that it is even more ‘truthful’; a few lines below he calls it a ‘truthful testimony’ and an ‘assessment’ that ‘puts’ critics ‘to silence’; he ends by saying that it is an ‘irrefutable verdict and vote of support’ and even avers that Mauropous is a ‘greater philosopher than Pythagoras’, because whereas the Pythagoreans would say ‘αὐτὸς ἔφα’ (ipse dixit, *he said it*), Psellos will just show Mauropous’ letter to the rest of the world: that should be enough. In 1047, the year of Psellos’ election, Mauropous was indeed a powerful courtier: he was the principal adviser of the emperor, proposed certain policies as regards the Pecheneg problem and the rebellion of Leo Tornikios, and was instrumental in creating the School of Law and electing John Xiphilinos as its *nomophylax*.¹¹³ No wonder, then, that Psellos was over the moon when he received Mauropous’ letter. His feelings of elation and triumph are obvious: for instance, ‘I am no longer the man I used to be. I have been transformed and, like a person in a trance, have no control over my body and soul; in many ways, I do not even seem to recognize myself anymore’, etc.¹¹⁴

The letter by Psellos unfortunately does not contain additional information on his election in the year 1047, but it confirms what Mauropous says or implies. Psellos explicitly states that he hoped to gain ‘the chair of philosophy’ (τὸν τῆς φιλοσοφίας θρόνον) and that his election ultimately depended upon the emperor: the post was one of ‘imperial magnitude and elevation’. And the

¹¹¹ As seen by Wolska-Conus, ‘Les écoles de Psellos et de Xiphilin’, 228, and Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 223.

¹¹² Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 223. ¹¹³ Lefort, ‘Rhétorique et politique’, *passim*.

¹¹⁴ These expressions of excessive joy and pride are very similar to those described in S 182, another letter to Mauropous, but written four years earlier, at another occasion. Mauropous himself, in letter 38, expresses similar feelings of exaltation at being offered a cushy position in the patriarchal administration: see Karpozilos, *Letters*, 231.

reference to his ‘teaching in all disciplines’ confirms what we already know: before his election to the chair of philosophy, when he was still an ordinary *asekretis*, Psellos already used to offer private lessons in his spare time.

At the very end of the letter, Psellos writes that the *notarios* was as ecstatic as he himself was because he, too, had been granted Mauropous’ benevolence. This is probably the letter bearer or perhaps a mutual acquaintance in the lower echelons of the judicial hierarchy who was hoping to advance higher up in rank and pay through the mediation of the powerful Mauropous. However, if Eva de Vries-van der Velden is right that imagination is a crucial part of the process of drawing historical inferences, one could ‘imagine’ that Psellos and Mauropous playfully alluded to their good friend John Xiphilinos as the ‘*notarios*’, not because he was one or had been one, but simply because it was their inside joke for a friend in the judiciary whom they loved. In that case we would not only have a reference to the promotion of Xiphilinos to the post of *nomophylax*, but also a fairly reliable chronology: Psellos was the first of the two to be elected to his chair and Xiphilinos’ appointment to the post of *nomophylax* followed soon afterwards. It would also mean that Xiphilinos was first a friend of Psellos and then met Mauropous. All of this may be true, or it may not. To quote Lemerle, ‘On mesure nos incertitudes’.¹¹⁵

APPENDIX: PSELLOS KD 34, MAUROPOUS 23, AND PSELLOS M 12 (=G 33)¹¹⁶

Psellos KD 34 To the same [=the metropolitan of Euchaita]¹¹⁷

My illustrious lordship! I would wish that, like mythical Typhon, you were always oppressed by such and similar hardships [i.e. as the ones mentioned in Mauropous’ last letter], so that you, weighed down by their burden, might continue to flash forth such fiery words and ideas in my direction. If I compare the tight corner you are in with the ample space of others, it is rather in your constraints that I find freedom and expansiveness of speech. True enough, the burden might be ‘Typhonic’, as you yourself think, but the thunderbolts are those of an Olympian cloud-gathering Zeus.

I was nearly thunder-struck by the sound of your words thundering in my ears. I was unaware that you are afraid of even the smallest of things, fearing the Black Sea and the Propontis as if they were the Adriatic and the Indian Ocean. But it is not really fear now, is it? It is rather a matter of forceful arguments, enticing words and just plain histrionics. Such is the power of rhetoric that it changes words and things, as if some heavenly being, contemplating perfect beauty, would be envious of life in hell and

¹¹⁵ Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 227.

¹¹⁶ The Greek text from which the translations of letters KD 34 and M 12 have been made is a provisional form of the new edition by Stratis Papaioannou, kindly supplied by the editor in advance of publication.

¹¹⁷ For a translation in French, see De Vries-van der Velden, ‘Lune de Psellos’, 240–2, whose interpretation of lines 53.22–3, 54.26–7, and 55.3–6, 10, 12–13, and 23–5 differs from mine.

pretend that for those in paradise the heavenly fire is a bit much, the stars frightening and ghastly, the circuit of heaven really a frightful sight, and the opposite movement of fixed stars and planets a thing that terrifies the beholder beyond belief, whereas hell is a place of rest and stability and whatever is scary there, is hidden in eternal darkness—and whatever else such an unstoppable rhetorician might come up with.

Oh you fortunate soul! Can't you see that fabled happiness is where you are? Just compare your life with mine. Nothing here is stable, nothing remains in one place—it all moves and changes all the time, and there are various turning points and varied fortunes in astrological terms, and heavenly swords prevent us from having access to whichever life-giving tree has been planted in whichever place. Your estates may seem backward, but their soil and climate are ideal, they enjoy tranquillity and do not alter, and the evils of fortune affect them little, if at all.

But if you insist, brightest of all men, let us trade places: you will have the palace, and I Euchaita. Ah, do I spot a sarcastic look? Is that a sardonic smile? Well, you can keep your long robe and your turban—they are not part of the bargain; I want the estates, not the sacred habit. I cannot recall whether I ever passed through your region and, therefore, do not know in what state of mind I was when sojourning there. But you, on the other hand, have recently experienced this our garden of Eden—and had you not left in great haste, you might have died under the very tree of life. There was nothing here that pleased you, and even without a serpent in sight, sneaking up on you, or another horrific creature bothering you,¹¹⁸ you were eager to flee paradise as if it were a place of horror. But if this sounds like nonsense and you envy me for the pleasures I derive from being here, then the divine meadow and the legendary Elysium are all yours, and they are even better than before! Our life here has truly been blessed in ways inscrutable.

At the moment we are, one might say, under the moon and the suns, and the order of things has changed tremendously, because the moon here does not frequent the seventh zone, but the first, and the sun-like and radiant pair is placed below it, distributing and softly shedding their light upon us. And the one who thus takes precedence, my dear friend, is quite something to behold: even though her attire is still somewhat lacking, she is beaming through the clouds and showing a glimpse of her hidden beauty. She honours candour with modesty, and modesty with candour—and neither is her conversation loquacious, nor her silence discourteous. She speaks with such propriety and moderation that you wish to hear more, but she keeps her tongue in check both when speech and when silence are required. Her outward appearance cannot be expressed in words—it has to be seen: she exudes beauty, youth, and natural graces, and possesses all the virtues in equal measure, although some are more conspicuous than others. Her innermost thought is to change things for the better, but without appearing to do so, out of respect for her consort—so great is her concern both for his reputation and for the improvement of the state of things. So, wherever and whenever possible, she tries to smooth the rough edges and better things that have gone wrong.

But do not take my word for it, come and find out for yourself. If you ever longed to see a sight sweeter than anything you have seen before, here it is—some surprise life

¹¹⁸ I follow Kurtz' suggestion to read *δείματος* here. Stratis Papaioannou (*per litteras*, 31 January 2011) thinks that *δήγματος* should be retained and suggests translating it as 'or another biting attack on you'.

has in store for you! So enter the garden of Eden and gorge yourself on the fruits and waters you are so envious of. And if the good life here suffices to make you happy, I do not want to hear another word about Euchaita. But if not, change comes easy to you, and north and south are all yours, whereas for me living elsewhere is distressful and leaving Constantinople is tantamount to not living at all, unless you would be there to keep me from wandering.

So this is the situation here. As for your nephew—it will not come as a surprise to you that he is already full of knowledge in the sciences and arts and brimming with wisdom, drawing from all sources, but especially mine, which he prefers above all others and believes to be superior to the rest. Not only does he devote himself to my streams, but also to the very pebbles therein, among which he expects to find true gems.

Mauropous 23 [no heading in the manuscript]¹¹⁹

O wise and wonderful one! summa summarum of the philosophers! Earlier today I sat surrounded by the holy chorus of divine philosophy, with whom I had a very friendly, but also very learned conversation, and when we finally went our separate ways, we were mutually impressed. I do not know what they liked in me—I am not aware myself of anything that merits applause—but I found much to commend them for: their brilliance, wit, astuteness, and urbanity, their eagerness to learn and their erudition, their longing for intellectual progress which is ‘erotic and inspired’ (as you yourself call this deep-burning and unquenchable zeal), and to top it all, their shared aspirations and common interest in what is good and best.

And my dear and wise Constantine, regarding the honours bestowed upon wisdom and the tenure of the professorial chair, what could be better than to select and elect you? You now ‘haunt wisdom’s heights’ (to quote Empedocles), ‘are glorified by the choicest music’ (to quote Pindar), and appear to be the very image of Learned Hermes or a moving library that speaks out to our generation, ‘upon whom’, in scriptural terms, ‘the ends of the world are come’ with such a drought of knowledge and learning.

It is for this reason that I eagerly expressed my great admiration to these young students, showered lavish praises on them, and promised to support their cause with as much enthusiasm as they show, not only in respect to the imperial authority, but also as regards the consent of the other students, those who are now applying themselves to letters and learning. I give my all to you, my dear and beloved soul, and in support of you, together with the rest, I offer my very self wholly and fully—it is yours anyway. And God willing, I will prove to be second to none in championing your wisdom and friendship, second not even to those admirers and followers of yours, nor to anyone else who, with good reason, is dedicated to your cause and, above all, to this splendid subject which is in danger of disappearing altogether from our schools.

Since you are superior in all respects or, to use your own words, you cover the whole gamut in perfect harmony, do take action with great vigour and undertake this career diligently and bravely, with God safely guiding you and plotting the course to success.

¹¹⁹ Karpozilos, *Letters*, 98–100, renders the complexities of Byzantine idiom in equally complex English (see the review by A. R. Littlewood, *JÖB* 42 (1992), 377–80, at 379), which is why I decided to retranslate the letter. For a German translation, see Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte*, 70–1, and for a French translation, see Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 221–3.

M 12 (=G 33) To the same [addressee as letter S 182, i.e. John Mauropous]¹²⁰

How divine Moses must have felt when he spoke to God face to face and received the God-inscribed tables, I can imagine—but I do not know it. As for myself, however, having been deemed worthy of beholding a sight and hearing a voice that is even more divine, namely your letter to me, I am no longer the man I used to be. I have been transformed and, like a person in a trance, have no control over my body and soul; in many ways, I do not even seem to recognize myself anymore. So here I am, strutting around and walking on air, as if I have been awarded first prize by some divine judge, by which, of course, I mean you. Remember Socrates the philosopher? When the Pythian oracle declared that Socrates was the wisest of men, he refused to believe it and dismissed it out of hand, which was perhaps not the most philosophical way to treat one's god. But as I know that you are more truthful than the Pythian oracle, with utterances more precise than its mutterings, I rely on your testimony and now confess to being what everyone says I am.

You see what a single pontification, one letter from you, can bring about? I feel like I am in heaven, oblivious to this earthly and mortal existence of ours. What would become of me, if you heaped praise upon praise and adulation upon adulation? I know what would happen—and that is why, in order to prevent myself from doing something silly and out of character, I have braced myself and built up my mental defences, so that a second or a third letter, were you to write one, would leave me unaffected and find me unyielding and impervious to praise.

Although plenty of people have testified regularly to my teaching in all disciplines, I was never tempted to boast. But now suddenly, because of your praises of (my worthiness of) imperial magnitude and elevation, I feel mightily flattered, but also rather surprised to hear that I am of such worth. I mean, if you were of noble stock, but not distinguished intellectually, or if you were both, but not agile of mind, or if you were agile of mind, but not ready of wit, or if you [were] not [capable] of judging [...], I would definitely not have changed my ways on account of [your praises. But since] you so fruitfully combine it all: a distinguished family, dignity of soul, [...] of mind, understanding, wit, why should I not consider a judgment coming from such a quarter as most truthful [in terms of] testimony? It is a judgment that should be engraved in bronze letters, that should [...] in [...] materials on iron and brazen gates, so that [no] rot or rust can obliterate it. I expect nothing less from this small letter [...], which I shall clutch to my breast as a talisman. And to anyone who will ask what my intellectual capabilities are, I will not give an answer, but just show your assessment and thus put them to silence.

Well, does this not make you an even greater philosopher than Pythagoras? When his followers would recite one of his dogmas and try to make sense of it, being at a loss what to say, they would offer by way of explanation and proof just this: 'He said it'. Likewise, when asked: 'Who has made you our judge and master, and what makes you think you are qualified to hold the chair of philosophy?', I will not say a thing, but just point to your letter, flaunting it as some kind of irrefutable verdict and vote of support.

¹²⁰ Since the sole manuscript to preserve this letter, Vat. Barb. gr. 240, has suffered damage and wear, there are holes in the text: these lacunas are indicated by square brackets.

So much for now. The *notarios* appears to share my feelings. He too has been granted your benevolence and, not knowing how to deal with his happiness, shouted it out to the world like someone in an ecstatic frenzy, recounting his past experiences and telling what kind of lord he has quite unexpectedly befriended through my services as go-between. So, what is the point of asking you to keep showing him your favour? Even if I were to keep silent, would you not be doing it anyhow?

Venomous Praise

Some Remarks on Michael Psellos’ Letters to Leon Paraspondylos

Diether Roderich Reinsch

Leon Paraspondylos,¹ or, as he is called by another form of his nickname, Strabospondylos, is a fairly well-documented figure in the political arena of Constantinople in the fifties of the eleventh century. We find him in the historiographical works of Michael Attaleiates² and Ioannes Skylitzes³ (excerpted in Ioannes Zonaras)⁴ and, above all, in several writings of Michael Psellos.⁵ Byzantinists have examined the interrelation between him and Psellos. The fullest treatments are by Jakov N. Ljubarskij⁶ and Eva de

I would like to thank the two editors for correcting my English.

¹ For Leon Paraspondylos, see A. P. Kazhdan and C. M. Brand, in *ODB*, s.v. Paraspondylos, Leo. *PBW*, s.v. Leon 62.

² Attaleiates 10.1. See I. Pérez Martín (ed.), *Miguel Atalíates: Historia* (Madrid, 2002), 39.4–11, with n. 4.

³ Skylitzes 479.14–17, 480.31, and 486.2–487.13.

⁴ Zonaras 651.14–652.1 and 656.11–657.4.

⁵ Paraspondylos figures (without being named, but very clearly and vividly described or hinted at) in Psellos, *Chronographia* VI 209 (a 6)–212 (a 9). 15.20; VII 9. 32.34 (ed. Reinsch); see also notes 547, 552, 554, 562, 563, and 606 to book VI and 97 and 105 to book VII by Criscuolo, in D. del Corno, S. Impellizeri, U. Criscuolo, and S. Ronchey, *Michele Psello, Imperatori di Bisanzio (Cronografia), I–II* (Milan, 1984). For bibliography of Psellos’ works generally see P. Moore, *Iter Psellianum* (Toronto, 2005). One oration is entirely devoted to Leon Paraspondylos: *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετὴν* (Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae* no. 15, cf. Moore ORA.66). In other orations Paraspondylos is alluded to: see Psellos, *Or.* 2 Polemis, §10.11–26; cf. Moore ORA.85, and Psellos, *Or.* 1 Polemis, §46.26–§48.38; cf. Moore ORA.84. The following letters of Psellos are addressed to him: KD 72 (Moore EP.430); KD 87 (Moore EP.224); KD 185 (Moore EP.240); M 6 (Moore EP.14); S 8 (Moore EP.28); S 7 (Moore EP.308); S 9 (Moore EP.255); S 118 (Moore EP.338); and P 1 (Moore EP.538). He is mentioned in letters S 10 (Moore EP.136) and S 198 (Moore EP.408).

⁶ J. N. Ljubarskij, *Michail Psell: Ličnost’ i tvorčestvo* (Moscow, 1978); second, corrected and supplemented edition: *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 2004), 140–9.

Vries-van der Velden,⁷ who came to sometimes very divergent interpretations as to how their relationship developed and as to the dating (more or less exact) of some of Psellos' writings dealing with Paraspondylos.

This is a very difficult field, in Psellos' case more than in others, because no chronological collection of his letters has come down to us, and because his other works, too, are not easy to date. If we want to date a certain composition, a letter or something else, we need first of all an exact analysis and a cautious interpretation of the text, as has been done for instance for a letter (P 1) published with commentary by Eustratios N. Papaioannou.⁸ As Papaioannou has convincingly argued, this letter has to be placed chronologically before letter S 10 (Moore EP.136).⁹ In other cases our understanding of the text is not yet sufficiently consolidated. As well as the critical edition, which Papaioannou will give us in the near future, we badly need reliable translations with commentary. I will give an example of a dating which in my opinion is wrong, because the text has been misinterpreted. Eva de Vries-van der Velden¹⁰ has dated letter S 9 (Moore EP.255)¹¹ to the period after 11 January of the year 1055 (the day of death of Constantine IX Monomachos), after Paraspondylos had been appointed head of the government by Empress Theodora. More exactly, according to Eva de Vries-van der Velden, this letter has to be dated shortly after Psellos' *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου* (i.e. Leon Paraspondylos') *ἀρετῆν*.¹² She had already dated this *Λόγος* to just this period after 11 January 1055 (let us leave aside for a moment the question whether this dating in itself is defensible). Letter S 9 has been dated by Eva de Vries-van der Velden after the *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων* 'sans aucun doute', because, as she argues, in this letter Psellos complains that Paraspondylos had not reacted to the *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων*. She paraphrases the beginning of letter S 9 in the following way:

Malgré la peine qu'il s'est donné à retracer les caractéristiques du grand homme, Léon n'a réagi en aucune manière. Cela vaut également pour quelques lettres (*logoi*) que Psellos lui a envoyées, écrites sur des tons différents, mais toutes composées dans un style élevé convenant au caractère du protosyncelle.

In the Greek text, however, there is not a word about a *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετῆν* which would 'retracer les caractéristiques du grand homme'. The Greek text runs as follows:

⁷ E. de Vries-van der Velden, 'Les amitiés dangereuses: Psellos et Léon Paraspondylos', *BSI* 60 (1999), 315–50.

⁸ E. N. Papaioannou, 'Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Neuedition. Mit einem Anhang; Edition eines unbekanntten Briefes', *JÖB* 48 (1998), 67–117.

⁹ For quotations of this kind, see n. 5.

¹⁰ De Vries-van der Velden, 'Les amitiés dangereuses', 324.

¹¹ K.N. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. V (Athens-Paris, 1876), 238–40.

¹² See n. 5.

Μήποτε ἄρα, θεία ψυχὴ, σὺ μὲν τὴν ἀσώματον οἶδας διάλεκτον καὶ διὰ τῶν νοημάτων συγγίνῃ τοῖς νοητοῖς, ἡμεῖς δὲ μάτην γλώσση καὶ πνεύματι χρώμεθα καὶ γράμμασι τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς σοι γνώμας ἐσημαινόμεθα; ἰδοὺ γάρ σοι τὰς πάσας μετηλλαξάμην φωνάς, βαρβαρίσας, ἑλληνίσας, ἀπτικίσας, ἕν' εἰ μὴ ταύτη, ἀλλ' ἐκείνη ἢ τῇ ἑτέρᾳ ἀνθομιλήσεις καὶ ἀντιφθέγξαιο. σὺ δ' ἄρα ἐλελήθεις ἑτέρουσ λόγουσ εἰδῶσ ἀπλοῦσ τε καὶ ἀσυνθέτουσ καὶ μὴ οὖσ αὐτοὶ ἴσμεν, τοὺσ ἐξ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων φημί.

Is it possible, my divine soul, that you know the incorporeal language, and communicate with intellectual beings by means of thoughts, whereas we vainly use tongue and breath and give you notice of the intelligible impulses of our soul with the help of letters? Look, I have used in turn all language registers, barbarian, colloquial Greek and Attic, so that you would speak to me and answer, if not in one, then in the second or the third. But I had no idea that you know other ways of expression, simple and elemental—not those which we know and which consist of nouns and verbs.

Apart from not being able to detect in the Greek text any equivalent for ‘toutes composées dans un style élevé convenant au caractère du protosyncelle’, I see the main misunderstanding in the Greek phrase *γράμμασι τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς σοι γνώμας ἐσημαινόμεθα*. Eva de Vries-van der Velden understood this as a hint to the *Λόγουσ χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετὴν*. Psellos, however, by these words cannot mean a writing describing the character of the addressee, but writings which disclosed what was going on in *his*, in Psellos' own, soul. It is the traditional motif of letters as a mirror of the soul of the sender.¹³ Psellos' complaint in letter S 9 is that the addressee has not reacted to the letters, by which Psellos disclosed the *γνώμαι* of his soul to him.

If the phrase *γράμμασι τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς σοι γνώμας ἐσημαινόμεθα* has no reference to the *Λόγουσ χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετὴν*, then there is no connection of content or date between letter S 9 and the *Λόγουσ*, and the whole construction of the story behind Psellos' letters to Paraspondylos is crumbling away.

My main concern, however, is not a new discussion of facts and chronological relations which we could gather from Psellos' writings to Paraspondylos, but the more literary question of irony, of the ambiguity of judgments delivered by Psellos in his writings about their addressees. The question of irony in Psellos is interesting for me, not only at a general level (for which see Ljubarskij),¹⁴ but particularly, of course, with regard to the last part of the *Chronographia* with the depiction of Constantine Doukas and his son

¹³ For examples in Byzantine letters, see G. Karlsson, *Idéologie et cérémonial dans l'épistolographie byzantine* (Uppsala, 21962), 94–9.

¹⁴ J. Ljubarskij, 'The Byzantine Irony: The Case of Michael Psellos', in A. Avramea, A. Laiou, and E. Chrysos (eds), *Byzantium: State and Society. In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides* (Athens, 2003), 349–60, and 'How Should a Byzantine Text be Read?', in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2003), 117–25.

Michael VII. Is Psellos here, as postulated by Ugo Criscuolo,¹⁵ using irony to secure a space of mental reservation, or does he intend all his gushing adulation of his addressees to be taken without restriction, be this as hidden as it may, as is apparently supposed by Apostolos Karpozilos in his characterization of Psellos?¹⁶

At the end of the nineteenth century for the first time and repeatedly since, a new punctuation mark has been proposed, the 'point d'ironie'.¹⁷ But even if in Byzantine Greek such a 'point d'ironie' had been available, Psellos could not have used it, either in these parts of his *Chronographia* or generally in his letters, because then the hidden venom of irony would have given way to direct aggression and would have jeopardized the author. The true art of irony in such cases is just to conceal from the addressee the aggression which is connected with the statement, or at least to make it intangible by what Brecht called a 'Sklavensprache' (slave language). Simultaneously it gives the author the chance to satisfy his thirst for aggression in a concealed way and, as the case may be, to share it with a later reader, who will decipher the hidden irony, if possible. Psellos was fully aware of this method, which he frankly admits having applied in the diplomatic correspondence with the Fatimid caliph with which he was entrusted by Emperor Constantine Monomachos. The Emperor had advised him to flatter the caliph by belittling the emperor. But Psellos, he says, surreptitiously did quite the opposite. He wrote texts which superficially fulfilled the advice of the emperor, but by ambiguous words and subtle dialectics denigrated the caliph: *Chronographia* VI 190, 8–11 ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἐλάνθανον ταῖς περιτροπαῖς τοῦναντίον ποιῶν· καὶ ἄλλο μὲν τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ κρατοῦντι διδοῦς· ἐλλοχῶν δὲ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον [i.e. the caliph] καὶ λεληθότως διαφραυλίζων τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασιν.

Letter S 9 is full of irony, in this case its very clear-cut variant. Even the salutatory address 'divine soul' (θεία ψυχή), on its own quite normal and harmless, in the context of this letter immediately gains an ironic dimension, just as a little later in this letter Psellos says 'I wonder how you, being a divine man, have no idea of the divine things' (θαυμάζω ὅπως θεῖος ἀνὴρ ὦν τὰ θεῖα ἠγνόησας). Papaioannou has seen this phenomenon, because he speaks of a 'subliminally discernible irony' (unterschwellig erkennbaren Ironie),¹⁸ and with reference to the letter he edited he says: 'Actually behind all the words of praise Psellos gives to Paraspondylos there are discernible critical or ironic undertones.'¹⁹

¹⁵ U. Criscuolo, 'Pselliana', *SIFC* 54 (1982), 194–215, esp. 201–6.

¹⁶ A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονογράφοι, τόμος Γ* (11ος–12ος αἰ.) (Athens, 2009), 59–185, esp. 81–4.

¹⁷ See J. Méron, *En question: la grammaire typographique* (La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, 1998), 21–2.

¹⁸ Papaioannou, 'Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos', 109.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

I would like to demonstrate this by relating some phrases of a letter written by Psellos to Paraspondylos with his characterization given in the *Chronographia*.

When Psellos reports that Empress Theodora appointed Paraspondylos head of the government, he draws a detailed portrait of the man.²⁰ On this occasion he denied to him not only eloquence, but generally every communicative competence and all the other talents indispensable for a man active in the public sphere (πολιτικός ἀνὴρ), but Paraspondylos knows, Psellos says, how to create around himself an aura of grave sublimity (σεμνότης). Not uncultivated, he possesses ‘a certain natural rhetorical ability’ (μοῦρά τις τῆς περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἕξεως), but in this ‘his hand was more able than his tongue’ (μᾶλλον γὰρ ἡ χεὶρ ἢ ἡ γλῶττα πρὸς τοῦτο ἡδύνατο). Oddly enough all translators understand that Psellos intends to say that Paraspondylos can express himself better by gestures than by words.²¹ In my opinion the Greek text can only mean that he is better in writing than in speaking.²² In social intercourse, Psellos continues,²³ Paraspondylos was churlish (φορτικός) because he had no statesmanlike qualities (πολιτικὸν ἦθος): he lacked every form of courtesy as well as the ability to respond to people in a sociable manner. Psellos writes that he admires Paraspondylos’ attitude, but that in his eyes it is superhuman: it is appropriate for eternity, not for man’s temporary existence. What is required here on earth, is not insensibility (τὸ ἀπαθές), but the soul’s faculty of compassion (τὸ πάσχον τῆς ψυχῆς).

At this point Psellos develops a theory of the condition of souls and the analogous grouping of men.²⁴ He distinguishes three groups: one of them corresponds with a soul which lives without a body as purely spiritual being, whereas the other two are those of a soul living in a body. Of these two in turn, with the man of public affairs (πολιτικός ἀνὴρ) is associated the soul which steers a middle course between being impervious and being susceptible to emotion (πάθος); between ἀπαθές and πολυπαθές. The soul of the πολιτικός ἀνὴρ is neither exclusively divine and intelligible (θεία τις νοερά) nor indulging the body (φιλοσώματος) and subject to many passions (πολυπαθές). This kind of state between two extremes (μεσότης) is the right attitude.

After this excursus Psellos comes back to Paraspondylos, again—in accordance with the rules of rhetoric—without mentioning him by name. People like

²⁰ *Chronographia* VI 209 (a 6)-212 (a 9).

²¹ And so do Kazhdan–Brand (as in n. 1): ‘Psellos... emphasizing primarily his uncourtly speech yet eloquent gestures’.

²² This is clearly shown by what follows: ‘But when he tried to demonstrate his knowledge also by his tongue, he made the audience understand the very opposite; so extremely unclear and crabbed was he in his conversation’ (εἰ γὰρ ἐπιχειρήσειε, καὶ τῇ γλῶττῃ τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἐνδείξασθαι, τοῦναντίον ἐδίδου νοεῖν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν. οὕτω πάνυ ἀσαφῶς καὶ ἀγλευκῶς εἶχε τῆς διαλέξεως).

²³ *Chronographia* VI 210 (a 7).

²⁴ *Chronographia* VI 211 (a 8).

him who belong to the first category of soul and live only an intelligible life (νοερά ζωή), should retire to a mountain top and keep company with angels. However, nobody can achieve this and, therefore, if somebody takes over a political charge, he should handle things πολιτικῶς and should not seek to represent the straightness of a ruler (τὴν τοῦ κανόνος εὐθύτητα), but show flexibility because if he refuses to accept the ecliptic (λόξωσις), he also rejects what follows immediately from it.²⁵

In his pretensions to the life of angels, Psellos continues,²⁶ Paraspondylos is only imitating a φιλόσοφος in non-philosophical surroundings. In his private life he seems to be quite different: luxurious as to his lifestyle, but also liberal and unbribable. But this goes only for his private life, in office he is inapproachable.

Psellos passes further critical comment on Paraspondylos, when he is dealing with the transfer of power from Theodora to Michael VI Stratiotikos.²⁷ It is worth noting, however, that Psellos does not only come to Theodora's, but also to Paraspondylos' defence over the attitude they adopted to Monomachos' administrative measures, many of which they had subverted: Theodora out of weakness and Paraspondylos out of resentment if we are to believe Psellos,²⁸ however, as for these policy changes, 'one could defend the empress as well as other people ill-disposed towards him'.²⁹ Psellos only takes issue with them over their failure to make provision for Theodora's succession. The election of Michael VI in Psellos' eyes (and not only his)³⁰ was a mistake, because the man was too old and not fit to be a ruler, but after all, he continues, 'I will not contend that they were entirely lacking in the best of intentions'.³¹ It is remarkable, too, that Psellos does not utter a word about the leading role Paraspondylos played in rebuffing the eastern generals when they asked for

²⁵ A difficult passage only recently clarified by the thorough analysis of Eva de Vries-van der Velden, 'Les amitiés dangereuses', 319–24, 348–50. Psellos uses a metaphor from astronomy. As only the deviation of the ecliptic with regard to the equator of the firmament makes life on earth possible, in the same way also the deviation from a purely intelligible life, which is suitable only for angels, makes possible the πολιτικὸς ἀνὴρ. Psellos himself, a few chapters later (VI 213 (a 10), 9) calls the astronomical ecliptic (λόξωσις) 'lifegiving' (ζωηφόρος). If somebody like Paraspondylos refuses the lifegiving ecliptic, he also rejects what follows immediately from the ecliptic, i.e. life itself. His pretensions to an absolute κανὼν therefore must be pure hypocrisy. As to the Greek text, there is no need to change the ἀπόσατο of the manuscript nor is there any need to accept Ronchey's correction of εὐθύς to εὐθύ. The text runs: ὅθεν εἰ τὴν λόξωσιν παραιτήσαιτο, ἀπόσατο καὶ τὸ ἐπόμενον ταύτῃ εὐθύς.

²⁶ *Chronographia* VI 212 (a 9).

²⁷ VI 218 (a 15). He and his fellow advisers did not take precautions in time over the succession of Theodora, and therefore, Psellos asks, who could exempt them from being accused of uttermost stupidity (τίς ἂν αὐτοὺς τῆς ἐσχάτης ἐξαιρήσεται εὐηθείας)?

²⁸ VI 218 (a 15), 6–12.

²⁹ VI 218 (a 15), 12–3 ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ μὲν τῶν, ὑπεραπολογήσαιτ' ἂν τις καὶ τῆς βασιλίδος· καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος πρὸς ἐκείνον ἔσχε κακῶς.

³⁰ See Attaleiates 39.12–40.12 Pérez-Martín; Skylitzes 480.31–40 Thurn.

³¹ VI 223 (a 20), 7–8 οὐ πάντῃ δὲ τούτους ἀποφανοῦμαι διημαρτηκέναι τοῦ ἀρίστου σκοποῦ.

awards, as we are informed by Skylitzes,³² who as to Paraspondylos' general behaviour fully agrees with Psellos, calling him harsh (*στρυφνός*) and difficult of access (*δυσπρόσιτος*).

This does not fit with the view held by Eva de Vries-van der Velden, that in the *Chronographia* Psellos took revenge on Paraspondylos, because Paraspondylos, when he was on the top rung under Theodora and Michael VI, had not helped him to attain a high position.³³

I would like to compare the portrait of Paraspondylos in the *Chronographia* with that of a letter dated by Eva de Vries-van der Velden to before 1055. In this letter, S 7, Psellos apparently responds to a letter, in which Paraspondylos had given a self-characterization and which in turn perhaps could be seen as a reaction to Psellos' *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετήν*, because it opens as follows: *Ὅποτε σὺ σαυτὸν ἐρμηνεύεις καὶ τὴν σὴν ἐξηγγῆ φύσιν, ἡγιασμένη ψυχῇ, ληροῦμεν πάντως ἡμεῖς ἐξ ἑτέρων σε χρωμάτων χαρακτηρίζοντες.*

In what follows, phrases from the critical portrait of Paraspondylos given in the *Chronographia* will be compared with phrases from this letter and the question will be asked, if the letter is really to be understood as praise and praise only, or if there is an ironical undertone. If the latter, this would indicate that Psellos already from a very early stage of his relations with Paraspondylos held the same opinion as expressed in the *Chronographia*:

Chron. VI 211 (a 8), 1–2 *τρεῖς γὰρ μερίδας ταῖς τῶν ψυχῶν προσαρμόζω... καταστάσει* (the state of souls I divide up into three)

S 7 (232.3–4): *διττοῦ γὰρ ὄντος τοῦ χαρακτήρος ἐκάστω ἡμῶν, μᾶλλον δὲ τριπτοῦ* (because the nature of each of us is bipartite, better to say tripartite)

Chron. VI 211 (a 8), 2–3 *ἀπολυθείσα τοῦ σώματος, ἀτενῆ τε καὶ οὐ πάνυ τὸ ἐνδόσιμον ἔχουσαν* (set free from the body, unbending and without any compromise)

S 7 (233.25–6) *κατὰ τὴν ἀμείλικτον πρὸς τὰ τῆδε τοῦ νοῦ φύσιν βιοῦντι ὥστε μὴδὲ σεσωματώσθαι δοκεῖν* (who lives according to the nature of the mind with cruel disregard for the conditions on earth, so that he seemed to have no body at all)

³² 486.1–487.13 Thurn.

³³ See de Vries-van der Velden, 'Les amitiés dangereuses', 346–8. Psellos' motive for not mentioning the role Paraspondylos played in rebuking the generals for de Vries-van der Velden is that 'il ne voulait pas mettre en lumière que lui et Isaac avaient eu le même ennemi. Cela aurait nuï à l'image qu'il créait de lui-même dans ce chapitre, celle d'un diplomate loyal et d'un philosophe impartial, s'efforçant avant tout de trouver une solution pacifique et raisonnable à la crise terrible où se trouvait la patrie'. This is not convincing. Why then did Psellos (VII 32.22–3) mention that Isaac demanded the removal of Paraspondylos from power with the disparaging expression 'this small man' (*τὸν βραχὺν ἐκείνον τὴν ἡλικίαν*)? Why, on the other hand, did he defend the role Paraspondylos had played together with Theodora in abolishing measures of Monomachos? This is not looking like 'vengeance', but shows the detached view Psellos had of his temporary rival Paraspondylos, whose attitude to life was so different from his own.

Chron. VI 211 (a 8), 3–5 τὰς δὲ γε λοιπὰς μερίδας τῶ μετὰ σώματος αὐτῆς βίω κατεύληφα. εἰ μὲν γὰρ <ἐπὶ> τὴν μέσην σταῖσα ζωὴν (the other two parts [sc. of the soul] I understand as belonging to its life [sc. the soul's] together with the body)
S 7 (p. 232.5–6): ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς μέσης [sc. ἕξεως] σε εἰκάζον ὡς οἶα ψυχὴν χρωμένην σώματι (I pictured you based on the latter middle way as a soul using a body)

Chron. VI 211 (a 8), 13 ἀναβήτω γὰρ ἐπ' ὄρος ὑψηλὸν καὶ μετέωρον (let him climb up a high and lofty mountain)

S 7 (233.17–8): κουφιζέτω σε τὸ πτερόν ἐπὶ πλέον καὶ μετεωριζέτω το πνεῦμα (let the wing lift you up and the spiritual air raise you up still further)

Chron. VI 211 (a 8), 15–6 εἰ δ' οὐδεὶς τῶν πάντων τῆς φύσεως τοσοῦτον κατεκαυχῆσατο (if nobody was able to exult so much over nature)

S 7 (233.22–4): ἐπιλέλοιπεν ἡμῖν ἐκ χρόνου πολλοῦ τὸ τοιοῦτον τῆς φιλοσοφίας γένος καὶ οὐδενὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἐμῆς ἡλικίας ἀνδρὶ τοιοῦτω συγγέγονα (this kind of philosophy has long been lacking in our world and I have not met or encountered a single man of this kind in my generation)

Chron. V I 210 (a 7), 8 τὴν στάθμην τῆς τοιαύτης γνώμης θαυμάζω (I admire the upright stance of such a character)

S 7 (233.27): ἄγαμαί σε τῆς φύσεως (I admire you for your nature)

In two small pieces of text we have a phrase cluster pertaining to the same person with obvious echoes. In one of the texts, the *Chronographia*, the phrases are situated in a clearly negative context. They describe a behaviour which stands in sharp contrast to the behaviour required for the πολιτικός ἀνὴρ and they show an ironic, if not sarcastic undertone.

The question is, therefore, whether in the *Chronographia* Psellos developed the ideal of the πολιτικός ἀνὴρ, who accepts the deviation from the superhuman ideal (λόξωσις), solely with the aim of providing a clear contrast to Paraspondylos' extreme mindset, or whether this ideal is for him a basic principle we must take as a given elsewhere and therefore also in letter S 7. In my opinion we can answer this question unambiguously: it is an ideal valid for Psellos' whole life which he has articulated in different ways in his writings. In the *Enkomion on Michael Keroularios* he says: 'I am afraid that insensibility and inflexibility in every relationship are the product of a hard-hearted soul, and not a philosophical one. Until now I never met this sort of philosophy in anyone, except in people whose nature is from the very beginning entirely devoid of any kind of fellow-feeling' (τὸ γὰρ πάντῃ πρὸς ἅπασαν σχέσιν ἀπαθές τε καὶ ἀμετάκλητον δέδοικα μὴ ἀναλήγτου ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ μὴ φιλοσόφου ἔργον εἶη καὶ ἀποτέλεσμα. οὕτω γὰρ παρ' οὐδενὶ τὴν τοιαύτην φιλοσοφίαν διέγνωκα, εἰ μὴ παρ' ὅσοις ἢ φύσις ἀπότομος πρὸς τὰς συμπαθείας ἐκ πρώτης ἐγεγόνει καταβολῆς).³⁴

A little later in the same work: 'So there are three ways leading to the best behaviour, and the third and middle one is more genuine and the most highly

³⁴ Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. IV, 319, 7 sqq.

praised by the better people' (οὕτω τριῶν οὐσῶν τῶν πρὸς ἀρετὴν φερουσῶν ὀδῶν καὶ τῆς γε τρίτης ἢ μέσης τῶν ἄλλων ἀκριβεστέρως καθεστηκυίας καὶ παρὰ τοῖς κρείττοσι τῆς μείζονος εὐφημίας ἀξιουμένης.³⁵ Here we find expressed exactly the same ideal as in both the *Chronographia* and letter S 7. In a more poetical wording we find the same statement about Psellos himself in letter S 157 to Konstantinos, the nephew of Michael Keroularios, on the occasion of the birth of the child of Psellos' adopted daughter Euphemia:³⁶ 'I intend to behave philosophically everywhere in words and in deeds, but my character convicts me of being disposed unphilosophically as to the natural emotions. But perhaps this is philosophical too, and the opposite is barbarian' (βούλομαι μὲν ἐπὶ πᾶσι φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ λόγοις καὶ πράγμασιν, ἐλέγχει δέ με τὸ ἦθος ἀφιλοσόφως ἐπὶ τοῖς φυσικοῖς διακείμενον πάθεισιν. ἢ καὶ τοῦτο ἴσως φιλόσοφον, θάτερον δὲ μέρος Σκυθικόν.

Psellos is always on the side of flexibility, whether it concerns himself or as a general ideal. He detests rigidity and inflexibility.

For the *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετὴν*,³⁷ Ugo Criscuolo³⁸ has highlighted the parallels with the passage from the *Chronographia* and has pointed to the 'sottile ironia' of the beginning, which runs as follows:

To describe the character of this man (let him be for the moment anonymous) is my intention, not to write an encomium. But if the speech about his character gives us some pretexts for eulogy, this shall not surprise you. Genres are intermingled and like to be combined, and the genre of character depiction is adjacent to that of encomium, and therefore someone who is treating the one, cannot avoid being involved in the other

χαρακτηρίζειν τὸν ἄνδρα - ἔστω γὰρ τέως ἀνώνυμος - ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκωμιάζην εἰλόμην. εἰ δέ τις αὖτε ὁ τοῦ χαρακτηήρος λόγος εὐφημιῶν προσλήψεται ἀφορμὰς, θαυμάζειν οὐ χρή. δι' ἀλλήλων γὰρ οἱ λόγοι διήκουσι καὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀλλήλοις συμπλέκεσθαι. ἄλλως θ' ὁ χαρακτηήρ ἐγκειτονῶν [ἐκ γειτόνων legerat Dennis] τῷ ἐγκωμίῳ ἔστι, καὶ διαταῦτα ὁ περὶ θατέρου λέγων, ἐξ ἀνάγκης καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ συμπλέκεται μέρει.

Rendered in two words this means: Watch out! Encomium!

We encounter something similar in the last part of the *Chronographia* which is to a large extent a homage to the Doukas clan. Originally the work was planned to stop at chapter 91 of book VII and was written in the lifetime of Constantine X.³⁹ After chapter 91 Psellos gives a short evaluation of

³⁵ Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. IV 329, 3 sqq. from beneath.

³⁶ Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. V 409. ³⁷ See n. 5.

³⁸ U. Criscuolo, 'Πολιτικὸς ἀνὴρ: Contributo al pensiero politico di Michele Psello', *Rendiconti della Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti*, n.s., 57 (1982), 129-59.

³⁹ For the different approaches to chronological problems in the writing of parts of the *Chronographia* see Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα*, 263-4 and Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονογράφοι*, 79-84.

Constantine, but in advance he gives a conspectus of what he will treat after this short evaluation: his lineage, family life, character, preferences, antipathies. All these are elements of encomium. It is all the more important for him to emphasize: 'That which I am writing is not an encomium, but a true history' (οὐκ ἐγκώμιον τὰ γραφόμενα, ἀλλ' ἀληθῆς ἱστορία)⁴⁰ and a little later: 'If I had set out to praise and not to give a comprehensive history' (εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐγκωμιάζειν προειλόμην, ἀλλὰ μὴ συνοπτικὴν ἱστορίαν ποιεῖν).⁴¹ Nevertheless he apostrophizes the Emperor (who is no longer alive) as follows:⁴² 'Oh divine and very pure soul, because I am induced to speak to you as if you could hear me' (ὦ θεία καὶ καθαρωτάτη ψυχὴ—προάγομαι γὰρ ὡς ἀκούοντι διαλέξασθαι).⁴³

In the part that deals with Michael VII, Psellos apostrophizes him as 'my most divine emperor' (θειότατε βασιλεῦ)⁴⁴ in a passage where he reports the help he received from the emperor in portraying his character, thus hinting at the indirect control exercised by the emperor over his writing. Of course he denies any flattery: 'I am not writing a fawning history' (οὐ θωπευτικὴν ποιούμαι τὴν ἱστορίαν),⁴⁵ but next to this he signifies that in dealing with Michael he is writing something like a hagiographical sketch. He uses typical phrases from encomia and hagiographic vitae, such as: 'I ask the listener not to assume that my words are greater than his character and his deeds, but that they fall short' (τὸν ἀκροατὴν παραιτοῦμαι μὴ κρείττονας τοὺς λόγους ἡγήσασθαι τῶν ἡθῶν ἐκείνου καὶ πράξεων, ἀλλ' ὑστεροῦντας);⁴⁶ he also uses the stock phrase: 'Nobody should disbelieve my words' (μὴ τις διαπιστοίη τῶ λόγῳ).⁴⁷

Beneath the surface of all these phrases lurks ironical dissociation, which at the very end of the work, where it breaks off with the portrait of Ioannes Doukas, nearly rises to open sarcasm. There Psellos praises in an elaborate way the military skills of Ioannes Doukas, summing them up in the words 'why should I list them all one by one? In every respect he was superior to everyone' (καὶ τί καθ' ἕκαστον λέγω; ἐπὶ πᾶσι τῶν πάντων κεκράτηκε). This is the text

⁴⁰ VII 109 (a 17), 2–3.

⁴¹ VII 115 (a 23), 12–3.

⁴² VII 102 (a 10), 8–9.

⁴³ The end of the Constantine section by contrast is abrupt, almost careless. It consists of a small Plutarch-like collection of aphorisms introduced by a lapidary phrase (VII 121 (a 29), 1–3) 'because we have treated his deeds now in a sufficient way, let us say what aphorisms he uttered during his reign' (ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀρκούντως αὐτῷ περὶ ὧν ἐπραξε τὸν λόγον ἐποησάμεθα, φέρε δὴ εἰπώμεν καὶ εἴ τι ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς παρεφθέξατο), and after having cited some aphorisms in an even more lapidary way: 'This is enough for this emperor' (ἀποχρῶντα ταῦτα τῷ βασιλεῖ). This sounds like the end of a set exercise and can be explained by the fact that the *Chronographia* obviously remained unfinished.

⁴⁴ VII 175 (c 11), 9–10.

⁴⁵ VII 164 (b 43), 2.

⁴⁶ VII 165 (c 1), 2–4. Compare for example the phrase from his encomium on Michael Keroularios (Sathas IV, 304, 11): 'the greatness of his excellence exceeds my speech' (ὑπερτείνει τὸν λόγον τὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς μέγεθος).

⁴⁷ VII 165 (c 1), 7–8. For formulas like μὴ ἀπιστεῖτε, μηδεὶς ἀπιστεῖτω etc. in early hagiography see A. J. Festugière, 'Lieux communs littéraires et thèmes de folklore dans l'hagiographie primitive', *Wiener Studien* 73 (1960), 123–52.

transmitted in the Parisinus graecus 1712. In the other branch of the tradition, the Sinaiticus graecus 1117, we find as supplement to this phrase the following: ‘except his brother and his nephew, the two always victorious emperors’ (πλήν τᾶδελφροῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀνεψιοῦ τοῖν δυοῖν βασιλείου καὶ ἀηττήτων). The notoriously unwarlike Constantine X and Michael VII *Caesares semper victores?*

Watch out! Irony! Psellos is a very sophisticated author.

APPENDIX: S 7 AND S 9

S 7 To the *protosynkellos*

When you interpret yourself and explain your own nature, my saintly soul, we are evidently speaking nonsense when we give a characterization of you in other colours. Because the nature of each of us is bipartite, or rather tripartite (to speak more philosophically about this), consisting of two opposite habits of mind and of one which combines both, I pictured you based on the one in the middle as a soul using a body. And that is why I thought that you must have something in you that is specific for each of these parts. However, as you have a knowledge of yourself which is nearer to the truth, you have described your soul as it really is. As for me, I am so earthy and material as to regard my sickness as sickness, and blows as blows, and wounds as wounds, and, taking all things by their names and effects, true to the famous word of Protagoras which has won the day, namely ‘man is the measure of all things, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not’.⁴⁸ So if it is the same wind that is blowing, but one of us feels cold and the other does not, he who feels cold will say that the wind is cold, and he who does not feel cold, that the wind is warm.⁴⁹ If I am beaten I will have the impression that I am beaten and if I am in pain that I am being stung. For you, however, things are not so nor will they be so; but they will be as you feel convinced and as you imagine.

I myself agree with you that truth is rather like what you have written, but generally it seemed to me offensive to speak and think in a haughty way. Because, together with this self-esteem, you have also been given the strength appropriate to your esteem, and because you jibe at our earthly life not only with words, but also with the attitudes of your soul towards it, and because you praise and admire life in danger as blessed and calm, not only saying so, but even reposing on stone as if it were a soft mattress, and because you regard what once you thought was drinkable water now as salty seawater, and really bitter liquid as sweet and like nectar, hold fast to your goal and your conviction, and let the wing lift you up and the spiritual air raise you up still further, let the Mind lead up your mind, let the universal Mind uplift the mind of your soul, whether it is an angel or the divine Spirit which is drawing you up to itself.

⁴⁸ The Greek text has instead of the name of Protagoras that of Pyrrhus, which is evidently wrong, because Psellos quotes the passage from Plato’s *Theaetetus* (151 e 8–152 a 4), where in the context the name of Protagoras figures more than once. For the famous dictum see Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* 80 B 1.

⁴⁹ This is quoted from Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152 b 2–3 and b 7.

You must know however, my most beloved brother, that this kind of philosophy has long been lacking in our world, and I have not met or encountered a single man of this kind in my generation who lives according to the nature of the mind with cruel disregard for the conditions on earth, so that he seemed to have no body at all. You are now the first I am meeting, and I admire you for your nature, that you are born not, as somebody said, as a demigod amongst half-asses, but as a god amongst a few demigods.⁵⁰ Whether you achieved this by philosophy or, so to say, by divine wisdom, in any case you must know that you have attained a grace belonging to a seraphim. I have encountered philosophical doctrines by which the soul accompanies superhuman beings, and I was full of admiration, but I found it difficult to believe. But now for the first time I have perceived it and agreed with it, and the doctrine has become reality. So lay hold of this golden chain,⁵¹ hold fast to this vertical line, and if some nature from above is pulling up, don't stop rising, until you reach the highest summit itself.

S 9 To the same [=the *protosynkellos*]

Is it possible, my divine soul, that you know the incorporeal language, and communicate with intelligible beings by means of thoughts, whereas we vainly use tongue and breath and give you notice of the intellectual impulses of our soul with the help of letters? Look, I have used in turn all language registers, barbarian, colloquial Greek and Attic, so that you would speak to me and answer, if not in one, then in the second or the third. But I had no idea that you know other ways of expression, simple and elemental—not those which we know made up of nouns and verbs. But even if this is your nature or your deliberate choice, you ought to have imitated your fellow-citizens, the angels, and spoken from time to time in a human way. Don't you realize that even the Divinity communicates with us in our language, and if asked a question by us gives the answer in words? Unless you refer to the spells of wizards, because they only clap their hands and make sounds by closing their jaws. But you don't give us even this. Apollo, when he was attacked for not giving prophecies to the masses, blamed the way they prepared for the oracle with its ominous sounds. But you, for what you could criticize us? Did we not direct our words to you at the right time? Did we not ask the question in a philosophical way? Was it not on a philosophical subject? Was the composing of the questions at fault? The form of our language? The shaping of our thoughts? The issue of respect? But where did we place you? Not outside the first celestial sphere? Not together with the gods of the primary source? Not with the gods beyond the zone or those that preside over a cosmic zone, just to speak for a moment in Chaldaean fashion?⁵² But if you are devoured by the paternal depth⁵³ (because I will persist in heathen teachings), I imagined you wandering about the endmost sphere, unless you are giving one part of the mixture⁵⁴ to God and

⁵⁰ Quotation from Synesios, *Epistulae*, 54 Hercher.

⁵¹ Proverbially since Plato and later the Church Fathers for the connection between the heavenly transcendence and earth going back to Homer, *Iliad*, 8. 19.

⁵² Psellos alludes to the concept of celestial hierarchies as developed by the Neoplatonists Proklos and Damaskios in their commentaries on several dialogues of Plato (esp. *Kratylos* and *Parmenides*), where they used the so-called *Chaldaean Oracles*.

⁵³ In this Neoplatonic concept the source of all beings is near the absolute One.

⁵⁴ I.e. human nature, as mixture of body and soul.

sharing the rest with us who live down on earth, like another Herakles, as the saying goes (a saying with which the poet agrees).⁵⁵

If I were a barbarian and therefore associated with barbarians, do you not believe that they would speak to me in barbarian language? If I were a pine, if I were a cypress, the neighbouring pines and cypresses would answer my sound by their sounds. If as an Attic man who gives birth to melodious literary products, speaking, if you like, to another Attic man, I carry on the dialogue only on my side, and if by this I look like a fool, because I am conversing with somebody non-existent, how do you believe I feel about this? You don't care a scrap about me. Smoke elicits fire and in this way the extinct spark is made to blaze up, but I being fire have not even got smoke from you. The same story is that you regard all people as of the same value. I wonder how you, being a divine man, have no idea of divine things. In the sphere of the divine something comes first, another follows it, and then the series emanated,⁵⁶ the spirits descending and becoming more and more faint until the end. But if you make the first and the last things of the same value, that means disorder and confusion. Or why do you, rather than me, claim to have your place near the divinity, and whereas most people are bowed down by the troubles of our human affairs, why do you rise up suddenly and communicate with the higher beings? But also the air is more illuminated than us, because it is situated nearer the divine light. But you enlighten us in the same way by hopes and imagine you are doing something positive for us to reach moral virtue. Where is the analogy? You have abolished the rules of organization, and there is nowhere any order, but all is full of chaos and thrown into confusion.

How I admire indeed your very sociable behaviour to me, if you fill up my home and bestow the same honour on me as on the Skythian.⁵⁷ So my long and intensive studies have been made in vain, if I have the same right as mules to communicate with you, you the most erudite man who converses with the intelligible by intellect.

There was a time when the Milesians were brave,⁵⁸ when you attended to my words like divine oracles and when you admired my tongue, both when I improvised and when I spoke in an elevated tone. But now for the most part you ignore me and you ask other people about me, and don't believe them if they praise me. In the old days you registered my words like an oracle, but now you close your ears if I utter anything, because apparently you are frightened of the charm of my words, that I could end up bewitching you. But don't be afraid, you are too strong for my enchantments. My words stay outside your door, they don't stream into your soul. But I shall also release you from their presence at your door. Turn away and communicate with God. The heavenly ladder is ready for you, and there is no problem when you descend, because you can climb up again whenever you like.

⁵⁵ Because Herakles in Greek mythology was assumed to be a demigod, a concept shared also by the poet (Homer).

⁵⁶ Again Psellos has recourse to Neoplatonic conceptions.

⁵⁷ The Scythian is the prototype of the barbarian.

⁵⁸ A proverb indicating that the good times have gone.

Part II

Summaries of the Letters of Michael Psellos

Michael Jeffreys

Introduction

1. WHY SUMMARIES?

The purpose of these summaries is to make Psellos' letters more accessible to those who wish to read and use them, both before and after the appearance of the new edition, now in the last stages of preparation by Stratis Papaioannou. There are more than 500 letters. The establishment of the canon dates only from the decade of 1990, and the last letters added can still cause bibliographical confusion. Fortunately there is now an excellent *catalogue raisonné* (P. Moore, *Iter Psellianum*),¹ to organize the publication history and manuscript attestation of the letters, as well as of all Psellos' other surviving work.

It is hard to understand the letters and place them in historical context. Dating raises particular problems. Even if their subject-matter is established, it is difficult to be sure what they mean, since there is extensive use of humour, allusive reference, irony, and unmarked quotation of earlier correspondence and of little-known texts from previous centuries. At present there are numbers of modern historians interested in the eleventh century who, despite considerable experience of Greek sources, frankly admit that their attempts at trying to use Psellos' letters have failed. Few of those who have spent years reading Psellos are confident of getting him right: the writer of these summaries is not one of them.

The most obvious way to bring the letters closer to modern readers is by translation. But that puts the emphasis on ways by which Psellos achieves meaning rather than what he wishes to say, and maximizes the problems. There are many cases, for example, where it is quite clear what a list of examples is attempting to show, but an item or two on the list is unclear or unintelligible. Translations tend to stress puzzling details as against clear intentions. Equally, a translation is limited by, and usually to, the words used by Psellos: a summary can add useful comments, e.g. characterizing a passage as dramatic or tragic. For this reason, the third-person 'Psellos said . . .'

¹ P. Moore, *Iter Psellianum* (Toronto, 2005). Abbreviated in the *Summaries* as 'Moore'.

has been preferred to the epistolary first person. This also underlines the fact that the summaries in no way replace the Greek originals, as a first-person translation might seem to do. These summaries should be used to search for letters among the 500 which are useful for some purpose, and to concentrate the users' expertise and that of their advisors on understanding Greek text which is relevant, rather than checking many hundreds of pages of letters which are not.

The summaries try to avoid translationese: faced with a choice between a phrase which makes good sense in English and another which follows the Greek more closely but will be unclear to English-speaking readers (including first- and second-language users), the former has been preferred. I expect that numbers of the summaries will be judged to be mistaken, but I hope that the choice of a clear but mistaken meaning will be a quicker route to achieving (finally) an accurate understanding of a letter than defensive translationese which is not wrong, but essentially meaningless.

One problem of using summaries rather than translations is the increased danger of introducing spurious narrativity to a group of letters with common subject elements. This is acute in cases where there are numerous letters addressing the same person within a few years, as in the letters to Leon Paraspondylos (see excursus 12). Diether Reinsch's contribution to this volume (Chapter 6) may be read as a protest that Eva de Vries-van der Velden was guilty of going well beyond the evidence provided by individual letters in her desire to form the Paraspondylos correspondence, with other texts, into a convincing historical narrative. Reinsch also makes similar criticisms of several of my preliminary summaries of letters to Paraspondylos, especially where 'REINSCH' is included in the bibliographies. Though I am more willing than Reinsch to accept the need for narrativity as a factor in composing the summaries, the present form of the relevant versions is much closer to that of Reinsch's criticisms than to my originals.

2. EDITIONS, REFERENCE, AND REORDERING

While we wait for Papaioannou's new edition, we have to use the ten publications listed first in the Bibliography (p. 447). Two are large (Kurtz-Drexel and Sathas), two smaller but still substantial (Gautier and Maltese), while the other six contain only one or two letters each. Each of these publications is given here a simple abbreviation, and reference is made by the abbreviation followed by the number of the letter in the publication, e.g. KD 100, S 200. In lists, the ten collections are ordered alphabetically by their abbreviations.

There are numbers of texts which appear in more than one of these publications, especially in Gautier and Maltese, which were prepared almost

simultaneously. In these cases the later of the two publications has been used as the basis for the summary, unless there are reasons for preferring the earlier, which are explained: e.g. the later publication used a manuscript providing an incomplete text. In these summaries a reference has been inserted to direct readers from published letters which have not been summarized to those which have.

Kurtz-Drexel and Sathas both include a good number of texts which are not letters. Some of these have been tacitly dropped from the canon of letters, especially if they were published in some of the earlier Teubner editions of Psellos' orations and may be consulted there; references are included here in the regular sequence of letters. Tactics changed at the point in 1998 when Papaioannou closed the corpus for his edition. Some other non-letters, especially if they were not available elsewhere, have remained in the canon and are summarized here, with a comment that they are not true letters.

There are four letters written by others, which were persistently included in key manuscripts of the canon: KD 209 (Psellos' student Kyritses), S 14 (Leon of Synada), S 15 (St Basil the Great), and S 202 (Ioannes Mauropous). These seem likely to survive in future publications of the letters, and have been briefly summarized here, with a comment on their status.

There are also thirty or more cases where between two and five letters clearly refer to the same event or situation, and the understanding of the group will be enhanced by examining them together. In approximately half of these instances, they also appear together in the manuscripts and have thus been printed together in the current editions. In the other half the linked letters are scattered through one or more publications. If it is clearly helpful for these small groups of letters to be summarized together, the summaries have been reordered to achieve this; the group is given a title and a brief indication of its content, and is surrounded by a single-line box, to indicate its status. (This also applies to groups already edited together from the mss, where no change of order is needed). A cross-reference has been inserted at points from which a summary has been moved (e.g. S 80 To the metropolitan of Euchaita [*see KD 54 and the four following letters*]). Letters edited out of order for this reason have their reference placed in square brackets ([S 80] To the metropolitan of Euchaita), so that the underlying numeration takes precedence.

3. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography attached to every letter is inclusive rather than selective. I hope that it will not send too many people to find obscure publications only to discover that the reference is not worth the effort. Some letters have been

'discovered' more than once, with no sense in any of the discoverers that anyone else has written about them. Some of the discoveries are limited in scope, yet still of significance. This corpus of letters until recently had very little bibliography, apart from that involved in the establishment of its canon. The situation is now changing, and I hope that the bibliographies here will help in the change. Many older publications refer to puzzling, outdated editions; these have here been made to conform to a common referencing system.

In the other direction, no claim is made or implied that the bibliographical coverage is definitive, or even representative. The range of Psellos' interests is so wide, and has such a geographical and historical spread, that no bibliography could claim completeness. That included here has benefited greatly from the assistance of those to whom I circulated a version of the text (see Section 6).

Where my summary of a letter has been significantly improved by personal communication (usually by email), outside the published bibliography, I have included the name concerned at the end of the bibliography in small caps, with a geographical identification, where it is helpful.

The most important function of the bibliographies is to replace detailed discussion of the secondary literature on each letter, which would immensely increase the size of the book, which is already very large. The bibliographical lists at least offer readers most of the materials to construct for themselves a history of each letter's reception. Scholars whose contributions are most undervalued by this process are those who (like me) have tried to approach the corpus of letters as a whole: I think particularly of P. V. Bezobrazov, E. de Vries-van der Velden, J. N. Ljubarskij, and R. Volk.

4. DATING

For the methodologies used in dating, see the 17 excursuses on pp. 417–45. Every attempt has been made to find helpful dating criteria, even if they are partial and not decisive, since the lack of a chronological framework for Psellos' biography is one of the greatest problems in Psellos studies. This need has persuaded me to go beyond direct dating criteria to add dating suggestions dependent on the hypothesis of a network of non-military administrators, described in excursuses 16 and 17. This has meant dates at the foot of each summary often involve the prefixes 'nw' and 'Nw' (network): the distinction between lower-case 'nw' and capitalized 'Nw' is that in the case of Nw the main dating criteria depend on the letter's connection to the network, whereas in the case of nw there are other factors as well (see excursus 17.6).

5. SPECIAL ISSUES

One of the biggest problems to be faced involves translating into English the strong and probably asexual friendship between heterosexual males demanded by the Byzantine epistolary doctrine of *φιλία*, and frequently described by Psellos. That linguistic space in English (at least) has now been appropriated by positive and negative reactions to homosexuality. Psellos sometimes uses hints of homoerotic sex to emphasize the intensity of non-erotic affection—a rhetorical strategy all but impossible in modern English. All that can be done is to flag the problem here, and to use the transliteration *philia* rather than ‘love’ or ‘affection’, reminding readers that the issue is doctrinal and not, or certainly not necessarily, sexual.

Some of the letters are cultural products well-known to Byzantinists (‘Plato is mine . . .’), and more will become famous, when brought into the scholarly mainstream by Papaioannou’s upcoming edition. An attempt has been made here to preserve traces of literary quality in the summaries, though Psellos’ stylistic refinements often operate at a level which disappears when summarized. Occasionally, where Psellos’ stylistic tricks cannot be reproduced directly, but a different but parallel English equivalent has offered itself, it has been adopted.

6. THANKS

The summaries in a fairly late draft were widely circulated among experts in Greek and in eleventh-century history who might be able to improve them. Around half of those contacted sent helpful suggestions, for which I repeat my thanks here. The inclusion of a scholar’s name in small caps in the bibliography of a letter in no way indicates approval of the summary of that letter as a whole, or anything else. It just acknowledges that the summary has been affected by unpublished suggestions made by that person in personal communication. It would be most unfair to blame any of those who have sent generous help for the remaining errors and imprecisions, which are my responsibility alone.

Michael Angold dug out old notes from his own reading of the letters and offered several valuable improvements to the summaries. Floris Bernard studied a large number of letters, particularly those to do with education, and suggested many corrections to their summaries, large and small. Zachary Chitwood made several useful comments, especially on legal points. John Duffy pointed out that a summary had omitted significant philosophical material. Nick Evans was an efficient explorer of Russian bibliography. Andreas

Gkoutzioukostas generously contributed bibliography, his own and others'. Elizabeth Jeffreys, as always, was a sympathetic listener and sounding-board, especially at lunch. She also gave sage advice over presentation and politely repeated that book projects need to be finished. Antony Kaldellis corrected some historical details. Marc Lauxtermann, as well as assuming editorial duties for my parts of the book, asked me for a list of the most problematic letters and suggested good solutions to many of them. Rosemary Morris proposed improvements in presentation and some particular points. Stratis Papaioannou generously offered (to me and others) preliminary texts of his future edition of the letters as a basis for translation, saved me from a couple of serious errors, and made several telling suggestions. Diether Reinsch improved my translations (pp. 85–8) and corrected several errors in summaries of letters to Leon Paraspondylos, especially interpretative comments added to some letters in the interests of narrativity. He was usually correct. Alexander Riehle offered bibliography, especially one book quite unknown to me. Klaus-Peter Todt was helpful on matters concerning Antioch, and sent me a copy of part of his *Habilitationsschrift*. Alexandra Wassiliou-Seibt is responsible for the way I have presented several letters involving Constantine, nephew of Keroularios. I have not had the courage to add her name to bibliographies in the usual way, as she disagrees with most of my conclusions. Most of these colleagues (and others) encouraged me by reading summaries without indicating mistakes, and even expressing some approval with what was said.

I wish to continue this collaborative process. I plan to collect any reviews which appear, and form their comments, particularly suggestions for improvement, into a journal article. By that time, Papaioannou's new edition should have appeared, forcing more inevitable changes in the content of the summaries (though I hope they will be much fewer than those which would have been necessary if I had attempted to publish translations). These will be added to the article. If others wish to contribute, I will be very willing to accept all significant suggestions and acknowledge them in the article.

Manuscript Sigla

Manuscript sigla, as set out by Papaioannou for his forthcoming edition.¹ The century of assigned date is expressed in Latin numerals (but for a³, which may be dated to a year). All but the two marked as parchment are paper mss.

- A Athens, Benaki Museum TA 250 (93): XVII–XVIII (30 letters).
- a¹ Milan, Ambros. M 84 sup.: XVI (14 letters).
- a² Athens, National Library 1896: XVI–XVII (1 letter).
- a³ Athens, National Library, Metochion Panagiou Taphou 363: 1596 (1 letter).
- a⁴ Athos Vatopedi 207: XVI (1 letter).
- a⁵ Athos Dionysiou 168 (Lambros 274): XVI (4 letters).
- a⁶ Athos Iviron 189: XIII (1 letter).
- a⁷ Athos Lavra 1721 (M 30): XVII–XVIII (5 letters).
- B Vatican Barber. gr. 240: late XIII (44 letters).
- b Bucharest, Romanian Academy gr. 737 (587): XVIII (5 letters).
- C Cambridge, Trinity College 1485 (O. 10. 33): XVII (5 letters).
- c¹ Cambridge, University Library Gg.I.2: XV (2 letters).
- c² Istanbul, Patriarchal Library Panagia Kamariotissa 157 (153): XIV (?) (1 letter).
- D Paris gr. 1277: late XIII (7 letters).
- E Madrid, Escorial φ III 1 (220): XVI (14 letters).
- e Madrid, Escorial Y I 9 (248): XVI (14 letters).
- F Florence, Laur. Acq. 39: XVI (8 letters).
- H Heidelberg, Palat. gr. 356: late XIII–early XIV (31 letters).
- I Istanbul, Patriarchal Library Panagia Kamariotissa 61 (64): XII–XIII (2 letters).
- J Bucharest, Romanian Academy gr. 594 (508): late XIII (3 letters).
- K Vatican gr. 712: middle of XII (37 letters).
- L Florence, Laur. Plut. gr. 57.40: late XI–early XII (228 letters).

¹ This table is abbreviated, adapted and reordered from that in Papaioannou 2012a, 307–9, to serve a different purpose. The sigla are purely conventional, and make no claims over ms. affiliation.

- l Florence, Laur. Plut. gr. 59.12: middle of XIII (1 letter).
- M Venice, Marc. gr. 524: late XIII (13 letters).
- m¹ Venice, Marc. gr. 445: XIV (1 letter).
- m² Munich, Monac. gr. 98: XVI (14 letters).
- m³ Munich, Monac. gr. 435: XV–XVI (1 letter).
- m⁴ Moscow, Vlad. 395 (Bibl. Synod. gr. 303): XV–XVI (2 letters).
- m⁵ Moscow, Vlad. 449 (Bibl. Synod. gr. 239): XV–XVI (1 letter).
- N Florence, Laur. San Marco 303: added by XIV hand in earlier ms (1 letter).
- O Oxford, Barocc. gr. 131: second half of XIII (41 letters).
- P Paris gr. 1182: end of XII (250 letters).
- p¹ Paris suppl. gr. 593: XVII (20 letters).
- p² Paris suppl. gr. 1334: XVIII (5 letters).
- t Thessaloniki, University Library 96: XVIII (5 letters).
- U Vatican gr. 1912: first third of XII (parchment, 44 letters).
- V Vatican gr. 672: late XIII (9 letters).
- v¹ Vatican gr. 306: late XIII–early XIV (3 letters).
- v² Vatican gr. 483: XIII–XIV (1 letter).
- v³ Vatican gr. 1891: late XIII–early XIV (1 letter).
- v⁴ Vatican gr. 1900: XVII (9 letters).
- w Vienna, Theol. gr. 160: second half of XIII (parchment, 2 letters).
- Y St Petersburg, gr. 250 (454): middle of XIII (26 letters).
- Z Athens, National Library 2429: first half of XIV (3 letters).

Summaries

C 1 (= S 175) TO THE MONK IOANNES XIPHILINOS, WHO BECAME PATRIARCH

‘My Plato?’, Psellos asked, dramatically. If Xiphilinos meant that Psellos often read Plato’s dialogues, admiring his thoughts and the power of his arguments, then why did he not make the same accusation to the great fathers whose precise argumentation overturned heresies in the early church? If he meant that Psellos followed Plato’s beliefs or relied on his laws, he was wrong. Psellos read many philosophical books as well as rhetorical speeches, including Plato (of course) and Aristotle. He also knew the Chaldaean and Egyptian philosophers. But in comparison to the pure, authentic Christian gospels, he found them adulterated and false. ‘My Plato?’. The charge was insufferable. He long ago adopted the cross, and recently became a monk. Plato belonged just as much to Xiphilinos, who had not disavowed his doctrines, while Psellos rejected most of them, though some were the basis of similar Christian beliefs. Xiphilinos’ list of charges read like a prelude to persecution. Either he had not understood Psellos’ letter, or it had been addressed to heretics. Xiphilinos showed hostility to Plato and philosophy. When had he heard Psellos identifying with those on his list? Not at court, nor while they discussed tonsure, nor in the monastery. He was accused of still being furiously angry. It would be easier to undergo a violent physical assault than for one dedicated to Christ to be accused of heresy, and thought by a friend (a judge) to have deserted God for Plato. Psellos defended himself against speaking of intangible lines, which were in fact the basis of mathematics and physical theories, so highly regarded by Maximos the Confessor, whose thought they had in common. Rather than taking pride in his lack of education, Xiphilinos should read all Christian and non-Christian literature, which would give a less haughty perspective. Psellos was from his youth a devoted Christian. He enjoyed ancient philosophy, but superficially. Most of its doctrines he rejected at once, while others he mixed with Christian texts, as did St Basil and St Gregory. He wished he could dispense with argumentation and see God as he was: but otherwise

argumentation was a necessary Christian way to approach truth, the solid food recommended by St Paul. Psellos protested that Xiphilinos turned against him some points he conceded out of friendship. He also argued at length against obscure geographical arguments used by Xiphilinos, commenting on their inaccuracy. Psellos used Chaldaean terms in a Christian framework to make a symbolic opposition between the mountain (Xiphilinos the monk) and the city (Psellos), ending by espousing both sides. He had been crucified with Christ, and symbolically renounced matter: but that did not mean abandoning the wisest of writings and knowledge of nature. He would pray to God to be allowed to wander in the fields of science, collect ideas, reason, seek rationales, and inquire into the mind. This was what he had done before, but he now found a door to go beyond the shadowy enquiries of the past. He also used rhetorical techniques of writing, convinced these were pathways to higher knowledge. He finally told Xiphilinos he remained a friend, and did not write because he disliked him but because he was wounded by the words about Plato. Psellos had replied at once, stressing that all ancient philosophy, Greek, Chaldaean, and Egyptian, was less than the words 'I am a monk'. He apologized for expressing himself so strongly as to be counted with Plato, separating himself from great Christians like Xiphilinos.

Date etc.: 1055–64 probably *c.*1055–6. Xiphilinos may have joined, in his own way, in attacks on Psellos listed in excursus 11. The fullest description of these attacks, S 139, is falsely addressed to Xiphilinos, not Keroularios, in one ms., perhaps because the scribe knew C 1. C 1 seems to have little structure and to contain mixed voices. It replies to criticism from Xiphilinos, behind which may be dimly seen a previous letter of Psellos. Psellos refers by summary and quotation to Xiphilinos' lost letter, leaving apparent contradictions between it and his reply. It is likely that the structure is taken from the lost letter. The famous phrase 'Plato is mine' which begins the letter and recurs like a refrain, reads much better as an indignant, interrogative, repetition of an accusation from his friend than a statement of Psellos' belief, as is often assumed. Xiphilinos probably referred more than once to 'your Plato' (Metzler 2007). The letter should be dated soon after Psellos left Mt Olympos in 1055 and resumed political life in the capital. The *terminus ante quem* is 1064, since there is no sign in the letter that it addresses a patriarch. The reference in the heading does not date the letter, it just identifies the recipient.

Moore 142: ms P, K, D, B. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 153–60 (partial Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 145 n. 3, 162 n. 1, 217 n. 2; Criscuolo 1973; Tinnefeld 1973, 167; Browning 1975, 11 nn. 39–40; Gouillard 1976, 316 n. 88, 317 n. 93, 323 n. 145; Lemerle 1977, 244; Tatakis 1977, 160 n. 107, 161 n. 112, 170 n. 162, 171 n. 163, 172 n. 173, 178–9 (nn. 209–20), 180 nn. 226–7, 181 n. 237, 183 (nn. 244–51), 187 n. 261, 196 n. 305; Ljubarskij 1978, 49, 53–5; Niarchos 1979, 130–1; Beck 1982, 141–5; Garzya 1985, 478–9; Anastasi 1988a; Maltese 1988a, 30–1; Criscuolo 1990a, 49–57 (edition of text), 61–7 (Italian translation); Ljubarskij 1992, 177–8; Angold 1994, 244–5 nn. 71–7; Angold 1995, 35 n. 41; Duffy 1995, 87 n. 16; Angold 1998, 236 n. 64; Agapitos 1998, 181–2 n. 55; Kaldellis 1999, 15 n. 34, 113 n. 230, 126 n. 263; Chondridou 2002, 211 n. 223; Ierodiakonou 2002a, 158, 159; Tatakis 2003, 130 n. 112, 131 n. 116, 140 nn. 168–9, 142 n. 179, 147 n. 215, 148–9 (nn. 217–33), 151 n. 242, 152–3 (nn. 249–56), 156 n. 267, 164 n. 311; Ljubarskij 2004, 84, 89–91; Walker 2004, 68 n. 44; Grünbart 2005, 72, 214, 220, 221, 323, 325, 352; Sarres 2005, 425 n. 49; Jenkins 2006, 146 n. 42, 147 n. 44; Kaldellis 2007, 201 n. 35, 203 n. 39, 207 n. 58; Metzler 2007, 293–6, 298; Siniosoglou 2011, 77 n. 72, 80 n. 80; Kaldellis 2012, 142–4; O'Meara 2012, 168 n. 36; Papaioannou 2012a, 302 n. 43; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 311 n. 17; Papaioannou 2013, 7, 22 n. 59, 109 n. 64, 134, 145; MICHAEL ANGOLD; JOHN DUFFY.

C 2 (= S 207) TO THE PATRIARCH MICHAEL
KEROULARIOS

Psellos wrote a long letter to Keroularios in the form of a comparison, beginning with an extravagant and respectful address. He then listed the extreme differences between them, varying the descriptions of both their characters in a disconcerting way from extreme praise to blame, suggesting that the whole is a thinly veiled attack on the patriarch, sometimes turning to open hostility. Keroularios was an incomparable angel going up and down between heaven and earth, forming a link between the beings above and humans below, while Psellos was a man with an earthly body, having no higher powers or ambitions; Keroularios was uniquely immutable, Psellos changeable and striving to improve; Psellos was always reading, studying, and teaching every possible subject, Keroularios' wisdom came in different ways, without effort, from mystic sources; Keroularios was a proud aristocrat descended from famous forebears, destined for a brilliant career, Psellos was not; Keroularios despised culture and literature, and so had contempt for Psellos, despite his great skills and high fame as a teacher in every corner of the world. Keroularios (Psellos said in mock admiration) had an inflexible nature and dogmatic rigidity basing his beliefs on unknown premises rather than reason and contemplation. Psellos had a philosophical throne of parallel importance, the resources of which Keroularios would need if involved in theology. Psellos believed in equality with his fellow citizens at theoretical and practical levels, Keroularios despised them and was ready to provoke and divide them: he should sheath his sword and quench his fire. Keroularios was the centre of Byzantium's religious drama, Psellos cowered on the periphery. The two were so different that neither could nor would compete at any level with the other. He congratulated Keroularios on being an ideal militant patriarch, but warned him that the success of the church should not come through violence. Psellos supported the monarchy, Keroularios hated it, and might be called democratic. Having performed his role in reconciling man and God, the patriarch should think of retiring, not trying to mimic imperial power. After another list of their opposite qualities, Psellos said he was writing Keroularios' biography, partly from his own information, partly from expert informants, composing with rhetorical skill and spreading his fame as widely as his text might reach.

Date etc.: 1051–4 (excursuses 11 and 12). This, like other letters to Keroularios, shows intense feeling by heavy irony. But there is no sign that at this stage Psellos has suffered persecution. Also, in the many contrasts he gives between himself and Keroularios, there is nothing to show that he had become a monk. This belongs to the stage of patriarchal disfavour before 1054.

Moore 426: ms P. Rambaud 1877, 265 n. 2; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 93–6 (partial Russian translation), 181–2; Zervos 1919, 99 n. 3, 207 nn. 4–5, 208 n. 1; d'Alès 1921, 199–204; Fuchs 1926, 30 n. 15, 31 nn. 5–6; Criscuolo 1975; Gautier 1975, 326; Tatakis 1977, 170 n. 160, 173 n. 178, 174 nn. 187–9, 176 nn. 196–7, 178 n. 210, 191 n. 285; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 84–6; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 223; Tinnefeld 1989, 101 n. 45; Criscuolo 1990, 21–31 (edition of text), 34–43 (Italian translation); Volk 1990, 218 n. 76; Ljubarskij 1992, 176–7; Angold 1994, 236–7 nn.

26–33, 238–9 nn. 41–45, 240 n. 49; Angold 1998, 235 n. 58, 236 n. 63; Agapitos 1998, 182–3 n. 61; Kaldellis 1999, 113 n. 230, 126 n. 262, 169 n. 349, 196 n. 388; Chondridou 2002, 213 n. 236; Ljubarskij 2003, 120–1; Tatakis 2003, 140 n. 165, 142 n. 184, 144 nn. 193–5, 145 nn. 202–3, 147 n. 216, 160 n. 291; Ljubarskij 2004, 127, 132–4; Walker 2004, 52 n. 6; Grünbart 2005, 72, 318, 351; Kaldellis 2007, 212 n. 70, 214 n. 76, 222 n. 96; O’Meara 2012, 155 n. 5, 167 n. 31; Papaioannou 2013, 4 n. 9, 7, 8 n. 19, 35 n. 22, 145, 150, 154 n. 77; Bernard 2014, 165 n. 32.

G 1 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos replied clearly to Ioannes: his wonderful character and letter had bewitched him, contact he was really delighted to receive. His answer to the question was straight: nobody had bribed him, but he feared more words of exclusion, like the man with no wedding garment in the parable. As for Constantine X, his attitude had changed, and Psellos had not seen him for a time, so he had no idea how he would be received at court. But even if Constantine tried to drive him away with violence and insults he would not leave, as the emperor was a good man. Psellos would happily meet Ioannes the next day.

Date etc.: c.1065 (excursus 6). Letters G 1–3, appear together in three mss, and were probably written around the same time.

Moore 390: mss P, B, p¹. Boissonade 1838, 170, 337–8, ep. 1 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, col. 1169, ep. 4 (Greek text with Latin translation); Spadaro 1972, 245–53; Ljubarskij 1978, 74 n. 47; Gautier 1986, 126–7 (French summary); Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Ljubarskij 2004, 118 n. 62; Grünbart 2005, 254.

G 2 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos congratulated Ioannes the *kaisar* on his handsome appearance and his wisdom, as seen in his letters, which consoled Psellos and tried to reconcile him to Ioannes’ brother Constantine X. They encouraged Psellos to be loyal to Constantine, when in fact Ioannes knew he was ready to die for him. Yet the emperor seemed to think him tedious. He neither spoke kindly to him nor listened as before, changing his former plain and straightforward attitude, and so Psellos no longer visited him, not out of dislike but out of respect or fear. Constantine was self-sufficient and needed no help from a scholar or an expert authority—which Psellos did not, in fact, claim to be. But he had proved a loyal servant and imperial encomiast in the past and would always be so. If he was no longer in Constantine’s favour, the fault lay with his sins. Ioannes should remain on the best of terms with his brother, but also retain his great friendship with Psellos in word and deed.

Date etc.: c.1065 (excursus 6).

Moore 339: mss P, B, p¹. Boissonade 1838, 171–2, ep. 2 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, col. 1169, ep. 5 (Greek text with Latin translation); Spadaro 1972, 245–53; Weiss 1973, 100 n. 321; Gautier 1986, 127–8 (French summary); Volk 1990, 205 n. 6; Grünbart 2005, 143 n. 54, 249, 254.

G 3 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to Ioannes *kaisar* in deep depression. Ioannes, once a full moon lit by a brilliant sun, was now a ruler with his own light. He had illuminated Psellos when near the earth; now, high in the sky, he would dazzle him with all kinds of rays. By contrast, except for Ioannes' inquiry how he was, life was bad for Psellos. Nobody showed interest or questioned him. All he wanted was to be asked questions, but nobody asked, and he was so depressed that without Ioannes' interest he would be dead. Ioannes' wide range of skills and virtues could at times make Psellos happy, especially his kindness. Psellos' grief was inevitable, but Ioannes should never suffer from envy: if his life was disturbed, calm would follow, easier to appreciate after the storm.

Date etc.: c.1065 (excursus 6).

Moore 289: mss P, B, v³, p¹. Boissonade 1838, 172–3, 338–9, ep. 3 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1169–72, ep. 6 (Greek text with Latin translation); Spadaro 1972, 245–53; Gautier 1986, 128–9 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 116; Grünbart 2005, 255, 277; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11.

G 4 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos spoke to Ioannes *kaisar* of the need to be careful of his scales, warning that he might be erring in balancing resources between Psellos and his other responsibilities. He addressed him in flattering terms. Psellos now knew that he was wise, because he had entrapped Ioannes, and this explained his sudden new assurance. When people asked about his confident air, he said he had defeated and captured one who was superior to all others. But he remained conscious of his inferiority. The owl was the ugliest of birds despite being admired by the eagle, and bees made honey from bitter thyme as well as roses and other flowers. Ioannes (eagle and bee) might admire him and his works, but Psellos (owl and thyme) was inferior, none the less. Yet he welcomed Ioannes' admiration. A final trivial comment: Ioannes should avoid tonsure, which Psellos had tried in his youth, and had not enjoyed.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 7: ms P. Boissonade 1838, 173–5, 339, ep. 4 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1172–3, ep. 7 (Greek text with Latin translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 72–3; Gautier 1986, 129–31 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 116–17; Grünbart 2005, 141 n. 40, 242, 277; Kaldellis 2007, 215 n. 80; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

G 5 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos (he told Ioannes) was not sure if he was handsome and wise. He did not use a mirror, or count the books he had read. He seemed much inferior to

savants of the past whom he studied, but when he read Ioannes' praise he felt like a demigod. Ioannes was collecting his letters into volumes, so Psellos reread Ioannes' letters constantly, was confirmed in his self-love and admired his taste. He thought of parallels. Monkeys are swayed by parental feelings to think their children beautiful; but Psellos had only recently started cuddling his own works on Ioannes' recommendation. Good charioteers are said to be ignorant or wrong in analysing their own skills; the real experts are their fans watching from above and dissecting every movement. Perhaps Ioannes played that role for him and his works? The Delphic oracle also needed someone else to interpret its pronouncements—maybe Ioannes interpreted Psellos. Perhaps Psellos was another Narcissus, in love with himself as reflected in Ioannes' letters? Ixion made a beautiful image of Hera which seemed ugly when he saw Hera herself. This was like Psellos seeing Ioannes in person, far grander than Psellos' remembered image. He thanked him for cheese and butter, and made a date to visit him: Wednesday in the palace.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursuses 6 and 15.2).

Moore 204: mss P, B. Boissonade 1838, 175–7, 339–340, ep. 5 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1173–6, ep. 8 (Greek text with Latin translation); Spadaro 1972, 245–53; Ljubarskij 1978, 71, 74; Gautier 1986, 131–3 (French summary); Volk 1990, 132 n. 13, 269 n. 4; Ljubarskij 2004, 114–15, 118; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2010a, 91–6; Papaioannou 2011, 56 n. 44; Papaioannou 2012, 175 n. 14; Papaioannou 2012a, 302 n. 43; Papaioannou 2013, 22 n. 59, 42 n. 49, 135 n. 19, 170–4 (substantial text and translation), 171 n. 14; Bernard 2014, 96 n. 98.

G 6 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Ioannes had written with his soul, making the impress of the sender recognizable in the letter. Because he said he was not sated by what he called the sweetness of Psellos' letters, Psellos would continue making honey. The sea had not been filled by all the rivers pouring in their streams, and moisture was still streaming down from the mountains to replenish the rivers. He felt a little oppressed by Ioannes' demands, and thought of escape, like the Athenians from Dareios' hordes. But where? He sought to flee by land, but received a gift of butter and cheese to remind him that sheep and cows were under Ioannes' control. He thought of escape by sea, but this was blocked by a gift of fish, as a kind of pincer movement by the wings of Ioannes' army. His solution was to fly through the air, for it was Lent and Ioannes would not be able to conscript the birds.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 74: ms P. Boissonade 1838, 180–1, 341, ep. 7 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1177–80, ep. 10 (Greek text with Latin translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 71–4; Gautier 1986, 133–4 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 114, 117, 118; Papaioannou 2013, 135 n. 18, 226 n. 103.

G 7 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos admitted that he was once ashamed to show his letters to Ioannes, as they had neither natural nor artificial beauty. But now he knew that Ioannes unexpectedly liked them, he had started strutting like a peacock, continually displaying them, ignoring Solomon's advice not to visit friends too often so as not to bore them with his conversation. He tried to vary his writing to keep Ioannes' interest, not transforming himself into different animals like Proteus or any similar spectacle, but like a kithara-player shifting keys and changing harmonies. His writing would vary from amusing to serious and soft to powerful. He would be more flexible than Homer's ambidextrous warrior or as attractive as a bride, like one he had observed, regularly changing her clothes and makeup. His writing included many literary outfits and jewels, which he promised to use as variations to hold his correspondent's attention and desire.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 79: ms P. Boissonade 1838, 181–3, 341, ep. 8 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1180–1, ep. 11 (Greek text with Latin translation); Gautier 1986, 134–6 (French summary); Volk 1990, 133 n. 17, 268 n. 4; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2011, 47–8 (English translation), 48–54; Papaioannou 2013, 148 n. 64, 223–6 (Greek text with English translation), 226 n. 103.

G 8 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos called Ioannes very fortunate [a *kaisar's* formal address] since he almost had from his brother [Constantine X] a share of imperial office, through Providence, reason, and affection. Ioannes was also learned and wise: this was no flattery, for Psellos did not praise him for his military deeds, past and present. He hailed his learning sincerely, though he lacked philosophy and rhetoric—they must admit the truth. His learning was shown by love of literature and knowledge, desire for eloquence, and taste for fine letters. Ioannes was an unusual *kaisar* as his good fortune affected others close to him, like Psellos, once famous for his writings, but now admired for winning the friendship and exclusive praise of Ioannes. But Ioannes was depressed for some reason and thought his brother's affection for him had cooled. Psellos used Ioannes' own words against him over this, praise of his brother's regard before and after accession, like the letter from Edessa and what followed. Ioannes knew his brother was consistent and could not change so much; Psellos, a good judge of men, agreed. Constantine's old-fashioned reserve did not always respond openly to friendly gestures. Psellos himself had often been deceived into thinking the emperor's undemonstrative manner was a slight, but had come to honour his genuine, straightforward character. When Psellos read Ioannes' letter the emperor smiled, but almost wept over monastic tonsure. He swore the decree about Antioch was to get news from Ioannes, not to harm him,

and the office of *kaisar* was a real sign of affection. Psellos claimed he was as true a friend as himself. Great good fortune, if not kept under control, could be dangerous. Ioannes must trust his brother, ignoring passing problems.

Date etc.: 1060 (excursus 6). It gives important hints on Ioannes' activities at the time of Constantine X's accession. He had a post in Antioch in which his brother interfered, and visited Edessa, from where he sent a letter praising his brother.

Moore 160: mss P, O, p¹. Boissonade 1838, 184–8, 341–2, ep. 9 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1181–5, ep. 12 (Greek text with Latin translation); Gautier 1986, 136–9 (French summary); Volk 1990, 132 n. 14, 237 n. 2; Ljubarskij 2004, 115 n. 60; Grünbart 2005, 72, 277, 278, 294, 323; Todt 2005, 608 n. 35, 609 n. 36; Jeffreys 2010, 82; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

G 9 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos accused Ioannes of trying to drain his well of inspiration in two ways, unaware it was inexhaustible and flowed faster when drawn off. Ioannes was trying to steal Psellos' hidden pearl for his diadem, after taking many others. But the biggest, whitest, and roundest he could not steal, as it was buried deep in his soul. His treasure of knowledge was inviolate and Ioannes' circling and digging only increased the flow, despite his skill in theft. The sun's warmth naturally brought up moisture from below to water plants in spring and summer, and the moon had no role in this. But Ioannes as sun told his moon the *kaisarissa* to help in attacking Psellos' source. Gifts of butter and cheese were used as bait to capture him in their nets like a fish or bird. Ioannes should trap bigger game, for he would not capture Psellos. Or maybe he was now completely caught, tender game already being chewed by Ioannes' teeth? What part of him was not captured? To say nothing of his soul, his tongue and hands were used in encomia and letters, and his feet to follow him anywhere: was Ioannes being greedy? Psellos' gluttony was also easily hooked by the *kaisarissa*'s gifts. They should share the spoils: Ioannes should show her his sweet letters to make her repeat her attacks. He enjoyed being hunted: they ended up with winged words, but he got butter and cheese.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursuses 6 and 15.1).

Moore 277: mss P, E, M, e, a¹, m². Boissonade 1838, 178–80, 340–1, ep. 6 (Greek text and notes); Migne 1864, cols. 1176–7, ep. 9 (Greek text with Latin translation); Gautier 1986, 139–41 (French summary); Maltese 1988, 30 no. 14; Grünbart 2005, 268, 277; Papaioannou 2013, 226 n. 103, 229 n. 109.

G 10 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wondered whether, if music was a metaphor for writing letters, Ioannes was his audience or a competitor. He saw Ioannes raising his lyre to respond, so

he was almost forced to keep the rhythm with his hands and feet. But while Ioannes could have Psellos' songs performed anywhere, how much would Ioannes' cost? As Pan sang in the mountains, hearing his own song resonating without payment, would Psellos freely hear Ioannes' voice responding to his own? If he only sang for payment, he would be inferior to Orpheus, who, though the greatest of musicians, did not perform for kings, but played for animals in natural settings for no fee, exciting or calming them. Psellos listened to Ioannes' letters as wild animals heard Orpheus, dancing for joy. He begged him not to limit use of his voice like other mythological beings, asking him about the most beautiful sound of all—the music of the spheres. Though Ioannes did not write often, he enjoyed the letters he sent, more than the ancient Assyrians who embalmed their best-loved relations or made wooden images of them; Psellos did not preserve the letters in physical form but made them amulets in his soul, seeming to see and hear Ioannes. But this was not said to stop him writing more, so that Psellos could hear his honeyed music.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursuses 6 and 15.1).

Moore 398: mss E, M, e, a¹, m². Ruelle 1874, 130–2 (French translation); Gautier 1986, 142–3 (French summary); Di Rella 1996, 101–2 (Italian translation); Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2013, 194 n. 9.

G 11 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos' letter did not mean he was only now picturing Ioannes, but showed that he often recalled him. Just as those living nearby were naturally aware of each other but occasionally spoke, so those who were apart pictured each other but wrote at long intervals, equating speech and letters. Psellos felt like a Hellene exiled to Britain who rarely met anyone who thought and spoke in Attic Greek, and wanted to address him in that tongue. The situation [in the capital?] was just the same, for those who spoke Attic were few and even they did not use it properly. But Ioannes in his higher sphere neglected Psellos, and unless an emergency occurred, like field-mice, he refused to speak to him. Ioannes was too philosophical, treating his inferiors too lightly. But he should not only speak because of insects that ruined his summer: he should speak out of *philia* and shared attitudes. Psellos said solemnly that Ioannes was the man with whom he felt the greatest affinity: if Ioannes felt likewise, he should do the just thing; if not, he was most unjust for not balancing their *philia*.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 6). Compare Ioannes' field-mice with the caterpillars of KD 102. This letter is also edited as the first part of M 1, where G 11 and G 12 are wrongly combined. The distinct attribution of G 12 in the mss is decisive against this.

Moore 367: mss E, M, e, a¹, m². Weiss 1972, 32–3; Gautier 1986, 144–5 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 113 n. 58; Grünbart 2005, 356; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 104 n. 201.

G 12 (= M 1) TO [AIMILIANOS], THE
Patriarch of Antioch

Psellos wrote of two philosophies dividing heaven and earth: one bubbled up from below, cloudy and brackish, the other flowed in purity from above. The first assaulted the ears with unnecessary memories and thoughts, the second went simply to the heart, with no sign of earthly origin. Psellos represented the lower stream, the patriarch the higher. How could Psellos compete against the latter's heavy storms of words, floods of verbal charm and incredible cloud-bursts? He only had drops of moisture from fissures in the earth, salty and undrinkable like the waters of Mara, needing the patriarch's (or Moses') transforming hand. The patriarch seemed afraid to mention letters to Psellos, as if facing a better wrestler, and he nearly broke the rule of *philia* which links separated souls by writing. Psellos once smiled at his pretence, and now groaned when comparing letters. It should be Psellos who used the first philosophy to compose words of great beauty; in fact his letters lacked harmony and pleasure, were confused and heavy, unpleasant from the start. As for theology, on one side there were visions, mystic initiations and insights, on the other, layers of simplistic thoughts without impulses for union with God. Was this the difficult ascent the philosophical patriarch feared? But his own position needed only mental clarity fully to reach the divine, and he could contribute more than Psellos to an ideal synthesis. The patriarch's theology made Psellos envy Antioch, which he protected, more delightful than the famous Daphne. How could Psellos find a place near him, to enjoy all his words? Distance made this yet more desirable. Could the patriarch not imitate the great rivers that irrigate vast distances and whole continents before pouring water past the Bosphorus? He should begin with a stream of letters from Antioch, which must take a roundabout route to reach him, because of the distance. At least there should be enough to give him a satisfactory drink.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursus 7). This writer of excellent letters is probably Aimilianos. Gautier edits the letter as addressed to Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*, but is unaware of some of the ms readings, which swing the balance of the divided textual tradition to Aimilianos, especially as much of the text speaks of Antioch (see Moore 2005, 33–4).

Moore 66: mss U, M, A, J, E, e, a¹, m². Canart 1967, 55; Weiss 1972, 32–3 nn. 83–5; Todt 2005, 608 n. 35, 609 n. 37; Papaioannou 2013, 245 n. 52, 265 n. 55.

G 13 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to the *kaisar* to announce that a thief had stolen from him 300 nomismata. Just as Aesop's camel petitioned Zeus for horns, but the God made it ugly for such presumption by removing its ears, so Psellos, planning to buy another estate, was deprived of his savings. The robbery happened a day

or two earlier, and in an amazing way. The robber imitated Christ, not in his violent descent into hell but in passing through locked doors. The case was like Rapsinitos' treasury or various persons in mythology stolen by winds. Psellos was left in philosophical poverty. But Ioannes should not cheer at Psellos' escape from a golden chain, as he was a willing slave to the money and the stress gave him a stomach ache. Psellos' main reproach to the thief was that he knew exactly where the money was kept: Psellos grieved that he had to suspect some of his servants and dissemble, not laughing and joking with them as before. He wrote the letter because he wanted Ioannes to share all his experiences, good and bad. He urged him to enjoy the innate goodness of his brother Constantine X, and have fun reading the letter.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 185: mss P, O, M, E, e, a¹, m², m⁵. Some mss wrongly address the letter to the patriarch of Antioch: as a reference at the end shows, the addressee must be the brother of Constantine X, *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas. Boissonade 1838, 117–20, 316–18 (Greek text and notes); Gautier 1986, 147–50 (French summary); Volk 1990, 434 n. 7; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2013, 10, 203 n. 36; Jeffreys 2017a, 46.

G 14 (= M 2) To Aimilianos, patriarch of Antioch

G 15 (= M 3) To Aimilianos, patriarch of Antioch

G 16 (= M 4) To Aimilianos, patriarch of Antioch

G 17 (= M 5) To Ioannes Xiphilinos

G 18 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF THESSALONIKI, WHO HAD BEEN MAÏSTOR OF THE RHETORS

Psellos told the metropolitan that a rhetor, speaking, writing, teaching, or philosophizing, was no more than a splendid tongue. Thus he was a citizen of the universe, a flash of lightning or a thunderbolt. The metropolitan used his rhetorical trumpet on Psellos not only when in the capital, but fired texts at him from afar, delightful arrows spreading pleasure through his soul. His rhetoric took many persuasive forms. Wherever he went he was the same brilliant speaker with all the rhetorical virtues (listed), in whatever place he exercised them (another list) and whatever style (yet another list). Sweetest of all were his letters, whose style showed the man, endowed by nature with impressive rhetorical gifts. People from everywhere had flocked to Thessaly before, but more now came to hear the famous rhetor. St Demetrios envied him, as he did not just heal bodies, but inspired all kinds of human emotions (listed). Thessaly and its rhetor were equally blessed. But Psellos warned against professional conceit: all Hellas and her colonies were once famous for rhetoric, but now lay in ruins. To preserve his wisdom, the metropolitan should write letters to Psellos, channelling all his mental and physical force to

the capital, as if by its aqueduct, watering Psellos with learned streams. Psellos loved his eloquence, which was imprinted on his memory, as were his words on his soul. But what about a visit? Psellos' gardens needed him as a bee, and his honeycombs needed his nectar. He should also remember his promises to write, and Psellos would respond.

Date etc.: undated. The addressee of G 18–20, who was plainly a churchman and scholar of importance, has not been identified. Gautier lists three possible eleventh-century metropolitans, one Ioannes and two Michaels.

Moore 333: *mss P, a*⁴. Tafel 1839, 361–3 ep. 1 (Greek text); Migne 1864, cols. 1161–6, ep. 1 (Greek text with Latin translation); Gautier 1986, 162–4 (French summary); Volk 1990, 222 n. 4; Papaioannou 2013, 29 n. 1.

G 19 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF THESSALONIKI, WHO HAD BEEN MAÏSTOR OF THE RHETORS

Psellos told the metropolitan there were many good reasons to admire him, especially his valuable and simple goodness in dealing with friends, both in their absence and in their presence. Positive views were as characteristic of him as myth was of poets. So whatever issue arose in discussion, Psellos at once thought of him, first praying that he remained as friendly to Psellos as the latter still was to him. He could prove this by helping the monk bringing the letter with his usual first-class support. The metropolitan should not betray himself, but remain totally consistent in character, not acquiring honesty by reputation but by showing everyone his rich stores of virtue. He should change the past into new and better ideas, not working extravagantly on his goodness, but gently and simply. It was vital for a metropolitan to know that character and beliefs could not be falsified. They must be used not occasionally but continuously. He should always be careful and moderate in his language in conversation, for what is not seemly even in name cannot be right when put into action.

Date etc.: undated: see G 18.

Moore 397: *mss P, L, H, K*. Creuzer 1823, 611–12, ep. 19 (Greek text); Tafel 1839, 364 ep. 2 (Greek text); Migne 1864, col. 1165, ep. 2 (Greek text with Latin translation); Gautier 1986, 164–5 (French summary); Volk 1990, 222 n. 4; Grünbart 2005, 230, 250; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

G 20 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF THESSALONIKI

The metropolitan must know many technical terms, especially of rhetoric. Psellos gave examples, with definitions from Hermogenes, from grammatical labels to complex means of controlling discourse. But he was astonished that the metropolitan had missed the key point, the crucial method. Before his consecration he was an expert, but not since, knowing the right terminology

but not its real nature. The more he studied rhetoric, the further he distanced himself from philosophy. Yet he was slow to abandon old habits. The proverb ‘acting as Cretan to Cretan’ did not fit, as Psellos was not (and did not want to be) a Cretan: but the metropolitan was acting as rhetor to a philosopher who, though expert in rhetoric, wished to be a philosopher, not a sophist. The metropolitan thought that with his letter he paid all his debts to Psellos: a debt could not be paid verbally without really giving any of what was agreed. That was fraud, the opposite of *philia*. If while holding the throne of rhetoric he promised students rhetorical secrets and gave them gossip, would that not be fraud? He promised Psellos something of his in return for what he had received, a bargain often made between friends. He could not escape guilt by giving empty forms, or worse still, meaningless words. Psellos believed not in shadowy words, but in the light of truth. If instead of his poor estate Dobroson, he was offered Elysian Fields and the Asphodel Meadow, should he accept them for their glorious names though they did not exist? He would outbid his correspondent, and offer all the western ocean and the Caspian Sea, Thule, and the Caucasus. The metropolitan had to honour his commitment in fact, not in words, or it would be a myth and counterfeit.

Date etc.: undated: see G 18. For Dobroson(tos) see p. 154.

Moore 300: mss P, L. Tafel 1839, 364–7 ep. 3 (Greek text); Migne 1864, cols. 1165–9, ep. 3 (Greek text with Latin translation); Tapkova-Zaimova 1954 (Bulgarian translation); Weiss 1973, 149 n. 511; Gautier 1986, 165–7 (French summary); Volk 1990, 222 n. 4; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 203, 220, 280, 283, 294, 357; Jeffreys 2017a, 54.

PSELLOS’ LAST TWO LETTERS

These two letters were both sent to Constantine, nephew of the late patriarch Michael Keroularios. For the circumstances, see Jeffreys 2014, updated slightly at pp. 79–83 in this volume.

G 21 To [Constantine, nephew of the patriarch Keroularios,] the *protoproedros* and *epi ton kriseon*, who was very dear to him, but had acted a little jealously.

The letter is very allusive: this summary seeks to recreate the underlying situation. There had been a period of equality of status between the two friends [they were both probably *protoproedroi* for most of the reign of Michael VII]. Now Psellos had achieved a higher rank, and Constantine showed his jealousy in a way that broke the rules of philosophy and *philia*. Having once (perhaps) had a higher dignity than Psellos, he had now been overtaken. But he soon apologized, and Psellos forgave him for having stumbled in *philia*, like Atlas supporting a huge weight. The rest of the letter discusses equality and inequality, making a distinction between comparisons

based on acquired skills and others which were a question of God-given ability. In the former he was willing to acknowledge Constantine's equality or superiority, even to let him sit on his philosophy throne, but there could be no compromise on the latter. The letter is full of generous condescension to Constantine, like the sun reacting to envious complaints from the moon.

Date etc.: spring, 1078 (excursus 9). The translation at pp. 87–8 uses a preliminary text of the new edition by Papaioannou. Constantine, as *protoproedros*, was overtaken in rank by Psellos, who must be *kouropalates* or *nobelissimos*. This was probably one of the last events of his life, in the mass promotions at Botaniates' accession.

Moore 76: ms L. Gautier 1986, 167–70 (French summary); Ljubarskij 1978, 66; Volk 1990, 227 n. 28; Chondridou 2002, 137 n. 130, 241 n. 94; Ljubarskij 2004, 108; Papaioannou 2013, 14 n. 36, 37 n. 29; Jeffreys 2014, 86–7; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 80–2, 87–8 (English translation); Lauxtermann 2017, 118 n. 94.

[KD 214] **To Constantine, *epi ton kriseon* and *sebastos*, nephew of the patriarch Keroularios**

Psellos wrote a tragic letter to Constantine, nephew of Keroularios. Constantine had sent him a fish, which reminded him of those sent by his uncle decades ago: Constantine had inherited his uncle's generosity together with everything else. The letter compared Constantine's house full of family with his own isolation, consoled only by the empress [Eudokia]. He is close to the palace, but with no access to it, like Adam after expulsion from Eden. Constantine is pictured living in a seaside house outside the city [Kalai?], enjoying all the delights of spring. Among Constantine's party were his second wife and her young children, as well as several slaves known to Psellos, especially Charistikarea, his favourite. Psellos, by contrast, was lonely. He was especially despondent about his relations; of his biological family, he knew where one (his daughter Styliane) was buried, while the other (his wife), no less buried, he had all but forgotten [was she immured in a monastery?]. His adoptive family were not with him, and he did not know if they were alive or dead. He ended with an envious description of the delights of the rural spring which Constantine was enjoying.

Date etc.: spring, 1078 (Jeffreys 2014, based on the Kurtz-Drexel edition). The translation at pp. 85–7 uses a preliminary text of the new edition by Papaioannou; see note 76 on the list of Constantine's household. With Constantine as *epi ton kriseon* and *sebastos*, this is probably the latest of the letters. Psellos says he met an empress, who must be Eudokia, freed from monastic confinement in early 1078. In this letter it is still spring. As the promotion of G 21 is confirmed in no other text, and Psellos had updated one of his earlier poems for rededication to Botaniates, he probably did not long survive the writing of this letter.

Moore 26: mss B, K. Oikonomides 1963, 120 n. 76; Ljubarskij 1978, 68, 80; Kazhdan 1993, 98 n. 20; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 145–6; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 206 n. 928; Ljubarskij 2004, 104 n. 49, 111, 127; Grünbart 2005, 156 n. 176, 226, 236; Jeffreys 2010, 85; Papaioannou 2013, 14 n. 36; Jeffreys 2014, 81–6; Bernard 2017, 29; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 81–2, 84, 85–6 (English translation); Jeffreys 2017a, 43; STRATIS PAPAIOANNOU.

G 22 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

The charm of those who brought the patriarch's letter to Psellos made it essential to write a reply, to greet the wise prelate and tell him his news—though he was extremely busy. He was still in good health and spirits, remembered the patriarch well and was eager to call down his blessings, to see him and enjoy to the full his shrewd, enlightening words. But since distance at present prevented the fulfilment of this wish, the best solution was to enjoy his delightful letters. He should write without delay, whenever he could, for it was good to learn of the health of one who combined noble writing, upright character, splendid virtues, and supremely divine attributes. But he should also, please, mention Psellos in his devotions; this was his God-given mission for all, but especially for those like Psellos who with grateful affection and confidence depended on his prayers.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (?) (excursus 7). This patriarch, known to Psellos, might be Aimilianos; but he is given lower status here than in other letters.

Moore 186: ms F. Gautier 1986, 170–1 (French summary); Grünbart 2005, 234, 249, 270, 297, 299.

G 23 (= M 10) TO [AIMILIANOS] THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos wrote to Aimilianos to help a monk of his flock, but failed, whether this was due to his clumsiness or the patriarch's determination. A first setback was no surprise: Moses had to ask God twice to pardon his sister. If Psellos had chosen a bad moment, he was to blame. But if the reason was the unworthiness of the monk, then he would renew his appeal to the glorious patriarch. Even if the man was a very hard case, was he so obstinate as to resist Aimilianos' influence? Could he hold out against his irresistible power that tamed barbarians? Surely not. A lamb from his fold was sick, had gone astray or worse; would he really not heal or save him, but just expunge him? It was beyond belief. His expectation was that as a doctor of souls the patriarch would fit treatment to disease; sometimes he would use gentle medicines, sometimes serious cutting and burning, as in this case, but with sympathy and to a good end. Psellos feared this patient might soon be beyond the possibility of healing. In place of aggressive treatment he urged oil or another salve, for the monk despaired for his life and salvation. His long journeys were no help, for nobody received one whom God's minister had banished, for fear of sinning himself. Punishment must turn to healing. If he was a serious menace, the more he sinned, the more care he required. Aimilianos should open the fold of the Theotokos and give him a shepherd. Psellos, a good judge of men, had often

met and interrogated him. His heart was sound and his tongue totally healed. He asked for pity for him, in the name of their friendship and the Trinity itself.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursuses 7 and 16.2). The strong patriarch who tamed barbarians is probably Aimilianos. Maltese edited this letter from the acephalic form in ms U, so Gautier's text has been preferred. There are similarities to the case of S 61.

Moore 347: mss U, F, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Gautier 1986, 171–3 (French summary); Volk 1990, 279 nn. 2–3; Maltese 1987–8, 216; Grünbart 2005, 256, 293; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

G 24 TO ARISTENOS THE *PROTOASEKRETIS*

Psellos made complex hypotheses based on various exchange rates between his letters and those of his ex-pupil Aristenos. After trying different values, he settled on 1:1. In these circumstances, they should try to make the products similar, like fabrics. Aristenos should see how Psellos wove his speeches, and use the same techniques and materials at the same level, choosing verbal or intellectual designs (preferably both), not zoomorphic patterns. If he remembered his lessons, he should embellish his letters as Psellos did, both their basic fabric and decoration. If he did better than Psellos, his teacher would not react badly, since he enjoyed defeat by his children. Aristenos' eloquence was developing as Psellos' waned. To speed up the process, if Psellos' tree of eloquence was still more vigorous than his, Aristenos should take a branch from it (or from Demosthenes, Aristeides, or Plato) and graft it on his own trunk. Thus his tree would become renowned for knowledgeable fruit. Talk of foliage reminded Psellos of his main purpose. Aristenos would not win crowns or triumphs for military victories and sieges, but he showed philosophical moderation in dress, and Psellos would place on his head one of the many garlands he had ready.

Date etc.: nw 1065–8, because of references to expeditions at the end (excursus 5). See also excursus 15.1.

Moore 113: ms D. Weiss 1972, 31 n. 73; Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378; Ljubarskij 1978, 61; Gautier 1986, 173–5 (French summary); Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Ljubarskij 2004, 100; Grünbart 2005, 220, 228; Papaioannou 2010, 15 n. 41; Bernard 2011, 143 n. 25; Bernard 2017, 32 n. 82.

G 25 TO EUSTRATIOS CHOIROSPHAKTES, *MAGISTROS* AND *PROTONOTARIOS OF THE DROMOS*

Eustratios Choirosphaktes was busy, and doubtless had many excuses, but Psellos wrote that he needed a letter—just a line or two would suffice. When they were all together, conversation had seemed unimportant. But now he was far away he really missed Eustratios and his colleagues, realizing how vital and irreplaceable such contact was. He was alone and depressed among his lifeless books. As some consolation he recalled their discussions and jokes, their cheerful

friend Iasites, their frank and honest exchanges. Such memories eased his pain. Letters would do even more, as an intermediate stage between memories and actual presence. He had once told his friend not to bother writing, but he now rescinded that stupid order. He imagined they might be speaking of him, even praising him. He also missed Romanos IV, wondering when he would return; why were they away so long after they had unexpectedly achieved so much? A big army had been raised, the sultan [Alp Arslan] put to flight, a major battle won, the barbarians subdued, cowed, or forced into treaties. What more could they expect in a few months? When just a report of Romanos IV's preparations had defeated the sultan, why had Eustratios not spread the news with trumpet-blasts, not letters? [Presumably public relations was a duty of his office.] It was as if nothing important had happened. Psellos had glorified Romanos before all available audiences, though he had little effect. If a few fires remained from the great inferno (he did not know), they could soon be put out.

Date etc.: nw 1068.

Moore 439: ms D. Weiss 1972, 30–1 n. 72; Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378; Gautier 1976a, 97 n. 49; Ljubarskij 1978, 60 n. 30, 62 n. 33; Gautier 1986, 175–8 (French summary); De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 280–1; Ljubarskij 2004, 98–9 nn. 38–9, 102; Grünbart 2005, 67 n. 43, 219, 220, 357; Jeffrey 2010, 87; Papaioannou 2013, 11 n. 28, 239 n. 14; Bernard 2015, 184 n. 48.

G 26 [TO IOANNES DOUKAS KAISAR?]

Walnuts too should be accompanied by a letter, Psellos said, as they are both natural products (the letter being an extreme case). He claimed that most savants said that nature did not have a set purpose: Psellos disagreed, and walnuts were one of many arguments supporting his opinion. Ioannes should see how cleverly she made the nut and distributed its contents, like girls two by two, making the partners symmetrical and dividing them. She protected these fragile fruits with the double shields of a twofold envelope, each supporting the other, one keeping the whole together and the other making divisions. Most people regard the walnut as an unimportant fruit, but Psellos thought of it as an animal's head with a brain and membranes, with a skull of solid bone around it.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 437: mss V, v^A. Weiss 1972, 24 n. 45; Gautier 1986, 178–9 (French summary); Volk 1990, 279–80.

G 27 TO SERGIOS [HEXAMILITES], KRITES OF THRAKESION

Psellos told Sergios of an impending visit by the monk Elias, an energetic traveller, but not in fiery chariots nor to heaven (like Elijah). Having tried the wilderness

half of the world and not liking it, he moved, with some difficulty via areas plundered by barbarians, to the comfortable half, like Thrakesion and Sergios, where he would like to make some money. If this was possible, let him do it. But if not, Psellos told his ex-pupil Sergios not to revere him as a monk nor fear him as Elijah, but follow his moods. He had a wide range of skills, combining opposites: bright and cloudy, Greek and barbarian, decorous and improper, able to take on any character on request, sing different kinds of song, play instruments, or imitate a lion or a monkey. He was a Protean entertainer of high quality, yet came self-invited at little cost. He should be enjoyed for a time, then sent away.

Date etc.: nw c.1065–8 (excursus 4). Cf. Sergios' many seals (Wassiliou 2002).

Moore 296: ms N. Westerink 1951, 51–2, ep. 8 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 105, 109; Gautier 1986, 179–181 (French summary); Limousin 1999, 360 n. 62; Wassiliou 2002, 254 n. 28; Dennis 2003, 47–8 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 160, 166; Grünbart 2005, 218, 220; Bernard 2017, 32 n. 85, 38.

G 28 (= M 8) [To a hegoumenos]

G 29 (= M 9) [To a monk]

G 30 (= M 7) To Ioannes Xiphilinos

G 31 (= M 11) Unaddressed

G 32 (= M 6) To the monk, protosynkellos [Leon Paraspondylos]

G 33 (= M 12) [To Ioannes Mauropous]

G 34 (= M 19) [To a metropolitan]

G 35 (= M 20) To the empress Eudokia when she blamed him for ingratitude

G 37 UNADDRESSED

[This letter has no lemma and gives few hints on the status of the addressee. Small lacunas in the first half and larger gaps in the second make comprehension difficult. This summary too can only be disconnected.] Psellos was told that his correspondent was insatiable for his letters, because he found in them nobility of soul. Why did he then change from Psellos' superior to his inferior harmonies? As his correspondent would say, one who is unsatisfied with the better does not need the worse, unless a soul is sickened by the ascent and falls from the heights to the utter depths. What kind of science or wisdom had he included in recent letters [...] ? He felt they were no different from usual. To change the subject: it was not in his character to despise his friends. If someone called him a philosopher on the grounds that he was able to make a soul more fortunate, he did not have the strength to be modest and deny it. If his philosophy had been useful to many, it was not surprising if he offered his words to the first and best of his friends, and revealed the other's hidden virtues over political actions. Both were probably acting naturally, Psellos forgetting or denying, the other remembering. But Psellos was pleased that his encomia and the other's words about Psellos' works were both true. [...]

Date etc.: undated. Weiss suggests Xiphilinos as recipient.

Moore 96: ms B. Weiss 1972, 32 n. 80; Gautier 1986, 195–6 (French summary).

G 38 UNADDRESSED

[A letter to a senior churchman on the last folio of ms B, in a very poor textual state, with many lacunas as long in total as the preserved text.] His correspondent has performed some service for Psellos. The latter discusses in the letter why his thanks may seem less than would seem appropriate.

Date etc.: undated. Too fragmentary.

Moore 132: ms B. Canart 1967, 55 n. 45; Gautier 1986, 196 (French summary); Grünbart 2005, 251.

K 1 TO ELIAS THE *PROTONOTARIOS*

Psellos said he had sent Elias some wild pears, which provide poor nourishment for animals in the mountains, and a few pickled birds. Elias, whose attachment to *philia* was incomparable, was to have no regard for the quality of the fruit, which were bitter, nor the quantity of birds, which was slight, but for the stance of one who practised *philia* without flattery. He hoped that Elias, after taking his fill of the gifts, would thank his unhappy friend Psellos.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 43: mss Z, N. Westerink 1951, 50, ep. 6 (Greek text); Darrouzès 1954, 176–7.

K 2 TO [SERGIOS HEXAMILITES], *KRITES* OF THRAKESION, ABOUT BITING SNAKES

Sergios asked Psellos about a man bitten by poisonous snakes with no ill effects. Psellos replied wondering if he had tough skin or some kind of immunity to venom. He thought that Ionia [Thrakesion] might be one of the parts of the Greek world which was free of poisonous reptiles, so that the man could be bold in handling them. Perhaps his blood was not to the reptiles' taste, full of black bile, as could be judged from its colour. He added as a *tour-de-force*, a list of snakes, poisonous or not, from around the world, with their different characteristics, especially strength of venom. People too, despite their similar physical make-up, varied in their reactions to poison. He mentioned his own idiosyncrasies, and spoke of other immunities, including a distinguished citizen [name omitted], who claimed never to have been bitten by fleas or lice [Sergios, his correspondent, made this claim as a student]. He told Sergios of the neighbour of his niece, the widow of Psellos' friend Anastasios

Lizix. This neighbour frequently handled snakes, and had them with her in bed, without ill effects. Either Sergios had seen a man handling harmless snakes, or their venom did not take effect for one of the reasons he had given.

Date etc.: nw c.1067–8 (excursus 2). The date is long after Lizix's death (c.1063–4). Sergios may have seen a gipsy snake-handler.

Moore 1041: mss Z. Volk 1990, 261–6, 364 n. 15; Ljubarskij 2004, 161 and n. 108; Grünbart 2005, 218; Lauxtermann 2017a, 5 n.13.

KD 1 To the metropolitan of Madytos [see KD 64 and the three following letters].

KD 2 [TO AN OFFICIAL]

He received a wonderful letter from a prominent lay official, and replied. He praised the pleasure brought by the letter and the seductive quality of the writing, the sweetness of its words and the composition of its syllables. He welcomed the most valuable news that his correspondent was well and prayed he would remain so. He projected the correspondence into the future, offering pleasure to both. His friend should be preserved without cares or problems, despite the many surrounding difficulties.

Date etc.: undated. KD 2–4 are formulaic letters of enthusiasm (KD 2 and KD 4) and of courage in adversity (KD 3), with nothing to identify the occasions on which they were written.

Moore 93: mss K, J, I. Lambros 1879–80 II, 370; Grünbart 2005, 280, 293, 345; Grünbart 2007, 60 n. 17; Papaioannou 2013, 245 n. 32, 265 n. 55.

KD 3 [TO A FRIEND]

He knew that he and his correspondent (whom he addressed as a learned superior) were eager for letters from each other, to learn news and enjoy fine phrases. But times were bad, Psellos' morale was low and so he wrote rare and only brief letters. He hoped they would not have to endure this situation much longer. His situation was going from bad to worse, and he did not have the consolation of seeing his correspondent. He added a number of encouraging quotations. They should take what opportunities occurred to encourage each other by correspondence, a powerful painkiller. This could not happen often, but they must not give up.

Date etc.: Probably written before 1047. A formulaic letter adopting a position of learned inferiority unlikely in the mature Psellos.

Moore 391: mss K, J. Volk 1990, 210 n. 28; Grünbart 2005, 80 n. 15, 273, 342, 355; Sarres 2005, 110 n. 4; Grünbart 2007, 60 n. 17; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85, 245 n. 32, 265 n. 55.

KD 4 [TO A FRIEND]

It was to this friend and no other that Psellos said he should break a long silence, after receiving a wonderful letter from him. When he opened it and read it, he went into ecstasies of joy and had an amazing reaction: he would have fallen speechless to the ground had not somebody been on hand to help. He realized that extreme pleasure and laughter can shock and disturb human wits as much as grief. When he reread the letter he admired every facet of its wise, beautiful, and urbane composition, a perfect whole, a standard by which to test all letters, a mark of his character. But then Psellos' attitude changed: he blamed his friend affectionately for not using this amazing eloquence to write before. What was his excuse? A lack of paper, ink, or pen? He cannot have been short of words. Did he not have time to write, or a carrier for this wonderful missive? Any excuse was a falsehood, and would be unbearable now that his friends knew what they were missing. He should either give up writing altogether, so that his friends could lose the taste for his letters and bear their loss, or write with scrupulous regularity. He ended with best wishes.

Date etc.: undated. See KD 2.

Moore 404: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 164 n. 59; Grünbart 2000, 307–8; Grünbart 2005, 75 n. 102; Papaioannou 2013, 194 n. 9, 265 n. 53; Bernard 2015, 185 nn. 52–3.

KD 5 TO THE EMPEROR ROMANOS IV
DIOGENES

Psellos had felt sad and ignored, blind and nearly dead in the long absence of Romanos IV [on the eastern campaign of 1068]. But having written of the emperor before his accession, he now approached him again as a credible panegyrist who was no flatterer. After a nervous silence during Romanos' absence, when he had nothing to say or write of him, despite the favourable rumours, he now recommended himself for encomiastic work of all kinds. He congratulated Romanos that the main enemy blaze was extinguished, though the usual spot-fires remained. The empress Eudokia was delighted by his achievements and proud of her choice of an emperor, supporting him by night-long prayers. She had been a great consolation to Psellos, but he needed imperial sunlight as well as Eudokia's moonlight.

Date etc.: nw early 1069, when Romanos returned from long absence on the Anatolian campaign of 1068.

Moore 193: ms K. Karpozilos 1982, 36 n. 84; Karpozilos 1990, 16 n. 29; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 285; Limousin 1999, 351 n. 23; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 12, 140 n. 33, 143 n. 54, 242, 256, 284, 288; Jeffreys 2010, 87; Limousin 2014, 164.

KD 6 TO IASITES

Psellos was anxious to communicate with Iasites the *kouropalates*, but complained that he talked well when they met but did not write when they were apart, despite being neither proud nor disrespectful of *philia*. That was his business, and he could choose whatever tactics he wished, unlike Psellos, who had the eloquence both to speak and to write. His very positive attitude to Iasites did not change with the latter's changes of fortune. They should cement their friendship, both profiting from their links to the empress Eudokia, who had proved independent and filled everyone with joy, showing her beauty of body and soul. He also recommended the letter-carrier to Iasites as a protégé and exile returning home, who might need help. Iasites should satisfy him by meeting him and speaking to him, and use him to take a reply back to Psellos.

Date etc.: 1067–8, as Eudokia ruled alone after the death of Constantine X, before marrying Romanos IV.

Moore 81: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 16; Gautier 1976a, 94 n. 26; Ljubarskij 1978, 62 n. 33; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 102 n. 44.

KD 7 TO A KRITES OF MACEDONIA

Psellos said, partly as a wish, partly as a boast, that the *krites* of Macedonia should get on with business and ignore malicious gossip from any direction. As Psellos' friend, he was immune from that. However many the sources of the gossip were, Psellos would strike them down, drowning out all opposing voices. The *krites* should steer a middle course between yielding to all requests and complete intransigence.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7, because giving professional advice (excursus 16.5). The epithet marking the *krites*' theme is unusual, and may just mean he was born in Macedonia.

Moore 189: ms K. Grünbart 2005, 226; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 117 n. 24.

KD 8 TO THE SEBASTOPHOROS NIKEPHOROS
[NIKEPHORITZES]

All the many glorious names of classical Greece (list provided), which Nikephoritzes administered [as *praitor* of Hellas and Peloponnesos] might be enough entertainment for him. But in case he wanted more, Psellos recommended for further amusement the monk Elias, who was coming to see him. The man was no expert on epigrams, but could very well inspire one to express

confusion of directions and motivations. Nikephoritzes should laugh and enjoy him however he wished.

Dated: nw c.1068 (excursus 4). Nikephoritzes was in that year freed from prison at Antioch and sent as *praitor* to Hellas and Peloponnesos.

Moore 110: ms K. Guiland 1963, 204 n. 45; Herrin 1975, 257 n. 7; Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 107 n. 88; Dennis 2003, 52 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 164 n. 111; Sarres 2005, 96 and n. 224, 126 nn. 69, 71.

KD 9 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos told a *krites* that he had been listening to a man who had arrived in great high spirits, with a wealth of splendid travellers' tales from many different areas in all parts of the world. Some extremely detailed and exciting stories were located at places like Byridoi, Herakleia, and Raidestos, near the capital, while others (less convincing) were from further east or from Western Europe. Psellos was exhausted with his verbiage, but could not stop it by pretending to be asleep. No doubt the *krites* had been regaled with stories about the capital. The man dragged Psellos on a verbal tour round the whole west, and would not stop. He also narrated a visit he had paid to the *krites* himself, giving an encomium of him and the most minute description of a dinner party of his he had attended, concentrating on the quality of the tableware and the serving of the wines. At that point Psellos escaped by pretending to be in a deep sleep. He wrote to the *krites* to advise him that, when the man returned, he should be given a warm but not too generous welcome.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7. Dennis 2003 suggests that this man is the monk Elias (though evidence is weak). If so, it may be dated c.1067.

Moore 42: ms K. Beck 1982, 350–1; Dennis 2003, 59–62 (English translation and Greek text); Grünbart 2005, 218, 220; Papaioannou 2013, 203 n. 36.

KD 10 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Though not infallible, Psellos declared himself to be a good judge of faces, able to spot worthless men pretending to be virtuous. He had long known and respected a man and befriended him; now he recommended him as of sound opinions and good character. The *krites* should check Psellos' judgement by befriending him in the same way.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7.

Moore 503: ms K. Weiss 1972, 14 n. 12; Volk 1990, 58 n. 25; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 72; Grünbart 2005, 220.

KD 11 [TO A FELLOW-STUDENT]

Psellos wrote to a colleague, reminding him of the bonds of *philia* which united them even more than their long sharing of a common life and lessons and their similarity of character. Their friendship was so firmly founded that they should write regularly and exchange appropriate greetings. If there were a way of imitating a bird in flight he would come in person to embrace his friend. But since the science of Daidalos (who entrusted his son's safety to malleable wax) did not allow Psellos to fly, he would have to travel overland to see him. So he was borne there on the wings of desire: it was not for nothing that Eroses were usually pictured as winged. Psellos was manning battlements in defensive mode, and they must beware of the dangers posed by the unpredictability of the local population, however just the judgements and sentences they delivered. They might rely on God to break down barriers and put an end to the wickedness of the locals. He hoped to see his friend as they both wished, and prayed that both would enjoy good health. Stylianos, a good friend and one of their group, needed a kind word.

Date etc.: c.1040–5. References to shared student days suggest an early date, when Psellos was himself involved in governing a province.

Moore 103: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 155 n. 21, 162; Weiss 1973, 128 n. 429; Ljubarskij 1978, 40, 204; Karpozilos 1990, 205; Volk 1990, 12 n. 25; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 126 n. 45; Ljubarskij 2004, 69, 71, 294; Grünbart 2005, 216, 219; Riedinger 2010, 10–11 (French translation); Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 20, 37 n. 108, 39 (English translation); FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 12 [TO A LEARNED BISHOP]

Psellos wrote to a learned bishop, relating how the two of them had met. The bishop had long been famous for virtue and wisdom all over the empire; Psellos heard of him, wanted to make his acquaintance, but did not know how to begin their friendship. But God unexpectedly found a way. The bishop, when rushing one day to the didaskaleion, passed the church of the Anargyroi, where Psellos took the opportunity to speak to him and thus a good friendship began, with Psellos joining the bishop's circle of students. He hoped the bishop would accept the gifts Psellos had just sent: they were small but well meant, showing the sender's wish to cement their link.

Date etc.: c.1040–2. The letter shows Psellos as the inferior in an intellectual relationship, and reminding his correspondent of a meeting from earlier still. The meeting probably occurred in the mid-1030s, and the letter was probably sent before the end of 1042, when Psellos was established in the palace. There is no reason to make the correspondent the metropolitan of Kyzikos.

Moore 184: ms K. Grünbart 2005, 254; Bernard 2014, 262 n. 32; Bernard 2017, 16, 19; Lauxtermann 2017, 103 n. 48.

PSELLOS, MAUROPOUS (?) AND A SERIOUS (?)
ILLNESS (3 LETTERS)

These three letters are addressed to the same person, who is called Psellos' teacher and treated with a mixture of banter and respect. He is probably Ioannes Mauropous (though cf. KD 12). Psellos accepts the junior role without question, which suggests an early letter, but there is a sign he may own a monastery (Agros, but see pp. 53–4). The illness is described in very severe terms, with a hint of exaggeration: thus we may read the letters at any level from the literal to Lauxtermann's suggestion that they represent an extended, joking excuse for missing a teaching session.

KD 13 To a teacher [probably Ioannes Mauropous]

Psellos told his teacher of a serious event, to get it off his chest. He had attended a splendid but noisy and boring wedding. When the end came at last, he decided to visit his teacher for a lesson, but some demon changed his plans and he made the mistake of setting off to the festival of the Holy Fathers [at Medikion]. He went on a boat with more than a dozen passengers and three crew. They began close to the shore, but when they reached the open sea, a terrible rainstorm forced him to forget the festival and land at Agros; from there he shortly after embarked on the boat for home in calm weather. But he had hardly left harbour when another storm soaked him, threatening to sink the boat, and drove him to another nearby harbour. After walking a distance on foot, he finally reached home, again by sea. Since then he had been half-dead, ill in great pain, not eating or drinking; he told Mauropous to visit him at once before he died.

Date etc.: c.1034–8). Was the wedding metaphorical—a *theatron*, or the buying of monasteries by *charistike* (cf. S 178)? In this early letter a literal reading may be preferable. For Medikion see pp. 53–4, 55.

Moore 413: ms K. Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 261–2, 266; Ljubarskij 1978, 42; Karpozilos 1982, 26 n. 29; Volk 1990, 424–427; Ljubarskij 2004, 74; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 289; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 17 n. 16; Jeffreys 2017a, 47, 53–5; Lauxtermann 2017, 102, 103 n. 47, 105.

KD 14 To the same person

Psellos told his teacher [the same as in KD 13] that *philia* would never catch on unless lovers gave attractive demonstrations of it. Psellos had vainly expected his friend, on learning he was bedridden, to make an immediate hurried visit, and now accused him of ignoring him and betraying their friendship. He now pictured the other relaxing in a lofty, Elysian setting, with beautiful buildings and gardens by the sea, while

Psellos himself was very ill, with several painful and distressing symptoms. The letter was expressly sent to provoke his friend to sympathy and a visit. He was not sure he would survive to write another.

Date etc.: c.1045–7, soon after KD 13. Lauxtermann’s idea that KD 13–15 form an elaborate sick note is attractive but unprovable.

Moore 135: ms K. Hunger 1969–70, 28 n. 83; Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15; Kassel 1977, 66 no. 10; Ljubarskij 1978, 42; Karpozilos 1982, 26 n. 29; Volk 1990, 424–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 74; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 289; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 17; Jeffreys 2017a, 53; Lauxtermann 2017, 102, 103 n. 47, 105.

KD 15 To the same person

Psellos complained that he had had only one sick visit from his teacher (the same as in KD 13–14), who had soon left and forgotten him. He needed to see him and hear him again, as he still suffered from painful illness. He was frustrated in his desire for contact with his friends. Illness imprisoned him indoors, and going out in the streets within his forty days of recuperation would threaten death, a solid excuse for neglecting his friends. What reason did his teacher have for not visiting his sick friend?

Date etc.: c.1045–7, soon after KD 14.

Moore 65: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15; Ljubarskij 1978, 42; Karpozilos 1982, 26 n. 29; Volk 1990, 424–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 74; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 289, 352; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 17; Jeffreys 2017a, 53; Lauxtermann 2017, 102, 103 n. 47, 105.

KD 16 TO ROMANOS, [ONCE] HIS FELLOW STUDENT

Two enthusiastic students of Psellos had nearly finished all their teacher’s old exercises in schedographia, and insistently demanded more. Psellos applied for help to Romanos, an enthusiastic expert in such exercises who had been a good friend and fellow student. He hoped Romanos still had some sparks of *philia* remaining and would remember the connection. He should maintain his reputation by sending some of his own exercises, to satisfy this small and easy request.

Date etc.: c.1043–5: Teaching still dominates Psellos’ life, but he is no longer a student.

Moore 281: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 17; Wolska-Conus 1976, 233 n. 70; Lemerle 1977, 217, 241; Ljubarskij 1978, 41; Chondridou 2002, 188 n. 146; Chondridou 2002a, 149 n. 2, 152 n. 12; Ljubarskij 2004, 71; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 291; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2014, 260 n. 28; Bernard 2017, 20, 22.

KD 17 [TO AN ECCLESIASTIC]

Psellos' letter is a long list of the clichés of epistolary *philia* with little sign of the personal and particular. Simple Homeric references abound. He speaks of the joys of face-to-face meeting and discussion, and the obligations of friendship, especially when conducted at a distance by letter. Psellos ends with a request for a copy of Plutarch (or a note that there is none available), and speculation about a visit by his correspondent.

Date etc.: c.1040–5? This may not be written to the Romanos of KD 16, as KD suggest, but to another fellow-student who was a priest. It may refer to the 1030s like KD 12. But the possibility also exists that it is an undatable model letter not reflecting a real situation and never sent. This possibility is increased by similar characteristics observable in KD 18 and 19, which follow in the ms.

Moore 106: ms K. Hunger 1969–70, 29 n. 87; Ljubarskij 1978, 41; Volk 1990, 174 n. 24; Ljubarskij 2004, 72; Grünbart 2005, 75 n. 102, 284, 294, 359; Papaioannou 2012a, 305 n. 55; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11, 22 n. 60, 176 n. 35, 239 n. 14; Bernard 2014, 47 n. 50; Bernard 2015, 184 n. 41; Bernard 2017, 20 n. 27.

KD 18 UNADDRESSED

This letter is addressed to a person able to picture and fill out stories with events, often with a satirical purpose. Psellos' aim too is comic, not encomiastic. The letter is centred round a simple but detailed retelling of the attack of the Sphinx on Thebes, stopping before Oedipus' arrival. The purpose appears to be to inspire his correspondent to write (or, less likely, paint) their own composition to fit this framework.

Date etc.: c.1045–50? The person addressed may be a child, perhaps a young pupil, who is given little respectful distance. One thinks of Styliane. Or maybe this is a model letter, written without a particular addressee and situation in view and never sent. If this should be Styliane, the date would be in the second half of the 1040s.

Moore 150: ms K. Karpozilos 1982, 105 n. 178.

KD 19 UNADDRESSED

Psellos told his correspondent, probably a churchman, that he should not have written to him at all if he did not want a demand for a second or even third letter, so charming and attractive was the first. He should not be annoyed that his gold brought only a bronze response and deprive Psellos of his letters. He should write, and devote his affection for Psellos to this, for Psellos was equally enamoured of him. But he should not praise Psellos so much in his letters as to portray him as greater than himself, for he was truly wise and learned while his audience was ignorant, illiterate, and insignificant, and he would see them

fleeing before him. Psellos would love to be recognized by his correspondent as superior, even superior to him, but was afraid he would more likely be defeated and fall to the ground from a height. It was more important that his friend should write regularly, responding to Psellos' friendship. That would bear and endure everything well, however intolerable it might be.

Date etc.: c.1040–5 ? The addressee cannot be the same as for KD 18 (as the ms suggests) since the tone is respectful and the address suggests a churchman. The acceptance of intellectual inferiority suggests a date before 1047.

Moore 92: ms K. Grünbart 2005, 280.

OBSCUR E EVENTS CONCERNING MICHAEL
PATRIKIOS (3 LETTERS)

The three letters KD 20–2 share their dramatis personae and form a unity. As their attribution to Psellos is not certain, their author is nameless here. He addresses Michael patrikios with great emphasis on their shared philia and confident of his own intellectual superiority, but equally expresses great social inferiority. These attitudes clash. If the letters are by Psellos, they date before he became prominent at court in the early 1040s; the claims of intellectual superiority are unlikely before, say, 1035. The three letters use ideas of philia and the role of letters found elsewhere in Psellos' correspondence. But the self-presentation of the writer is not Psellos' usual approach, and the narrative is unusually obscure. The possibility of another attribution should be discussed, especially if there is no record of a commentary on Hermogenes by Mauropous.

KD 20 To Michael patrikios

The writer had just sent Michael a copy of his teacher's commentary on the Staseis [of Hermogenes], which Michael had ordered as from a servant. He reacted with willing enthusiasm to the instruction, because of his respect for Michael, but urged him not to leave it unused under the bed but to employ it creatively. He then spoke of help available in smoothing Michael's way by explaining any difficulties in the text, offering his own assistance in an extremely grandiloquent way. Two other people are involved, but their roles are left obscure by reference to a previous discussion. One is referred to as τὸν μέγαν, the other is a distinguished *magistros* who is Michael's relation by marriage. Michael seems to be urged to persuade the former (and probably the latter too) to come to him, and assured that the task is easy if he concentrates his efforts, despite winter weather and a long journey. The writer ends with a more general offer of help and prayer for divine protection.

Date etc.: before 1047 (?). KD 20–2 show Psellos in a quite different thought-world from that of his mature letters, and writing with an unusual lack of clarity. He could hardly use the words ‘my wise teacher’ of anybody but Mauropous: did the latter write on Hermogenes? Surely the recent commentary on Hermogenes was by Ioannes Sikeliotēs, who might be right chronologically, but has not been linked to Psellos. Could there be doubt about the attribution of this group? If they are by Psellos, the humble attitude shown towards Michael would date it in the period before 1047, maybe long before.

Moore 84: ms K. Karpozilos 1984, 31 n. 149; Grünbart 2005, 289, 302; Papaioannou 2012a, 305 n. 55; Papaioannou 2013, 22 n. 60, 71 n. 66.

KD 21 To Michael *patrikios*

The letter begins with the *topos* that letters conquer time and distance of separation, which the writer applied to his relationship with Michael. Their separation had now lasted more than ten days and was insufferable. He asked for details about Michael’s health and well-being, but his main purpose was to request news whether the *magistros* had arrived. He demands from Michael an answer, yes or no.

Date etc.: before 1047 (?). A few days after KD 20.

Moore 122: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 17, 161 n. 48, 162, 274; Grünbart 2005, 289.

KD 22 To Michael *patrikios*

The letter again repeats *topoi* about the role of letters, expressing the two correspondents’ need for epistolary *philia* in a strong and persuasive way. They had now been apart for nearly two weeks, which felt like two years. The writer complained of severe depression, which was alleviated by writing to Michael, asking about his state of mind and planning a rich correspondence. Then, with an abrupt transition, he wondered whether Michael had adopted Pythagorean silence, since he had still sent no news of the *magistros*. Surely it would be easy to send a message, oral or written? If this was difficult, what might be easy?

Date etc.: before 1047 (?). A few days after KD 20.

Moore 358: ms K. Grünbart 2005, 285, 289.

KD 23 TO A MONK FROM HAGIOS ANASTASIOS

Psellos had invited a monk from Hagios Anastasios to a meal and maybe a bath, but circumstances had forced him to cancel the invitation. The monk had felt insulted and had become very angry, making it hard and embarrassing for Psellos to face him or communicate with him. But now that Psellos was less

busy he asked his correspondent with solemn politeness and apologies to calm down and come for a meal the following day—thus confirming the previous invitation and apology too as genuine.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 104: ms K. Grünbart 2005, 249, 251.

KD 24 TO ESAIAS THE *PROXIMOS*

Though having an extremely high reputation for virtue, Esaias *proximos* (according to Psellos) did not love his enemies (as required by Christ), or even his friends. Psellos had been very ill, but Esaias, despite his protestations of friendship, did not visit him, though Psellos' recovery depended on his prayers. He could not pretend ignorance of the situation: he was doing harm to the idea of *philia*. The letter-carrier (he told Esaias) was the son of their friend Theophanes and had been Psellos' pupil, but had stopped studying and started to indulge in amusements when Psellos fell ill and could no longer control him. Esaias should punish him for his loose living, and take him over among his students, under his holy control.

Date etc.: c.1043–5: Psellos is heavily involved in teaching and not far from his own student days; perhaps the illness described is the same as that which dominates KD 14–16.

Moore 448: ms K. Lemerle 1977, 217, 241; Volk 1990, 13 n. 33, 441–2; Chondridou 2002, 188 n. 145; Grünbart 2005, 284; Bernard 2014, 260 n. 28.

BANTER WITH A FELLOW STUDENT (2 LETTERS)

This letter and the next belong together to a period soon after Psellos' schooldays. The second apologizes for the hasty style of the first.

KD 25 To his fellow student Georgios

Georgios had asked Psellos to return his uncle's writing-tablet, elaborately praising him as having once been a fellow student. Psellos replied quickly claiming he made no attempt to impress as he was extremely busy—but with praise as long and elaborate as Georgios'. He would not have taken this course with another correspondent less devoted to friendship and sensitive to literary style. [Maybe in fact he doubted Georgios' sincerity.] He said that he had refused to send back Georgios' uncle's tablet as he had

not got back his own. Now he sent the former, in the hope of receiving the latter.

Date etc.: c.1038 (one of the oldest of the letters). Psellos still thinks as a student.

Moore 116: ms K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 17; Weiss 1973, 29 n. 92; Ljubarskij 1978, 41; Ljubarskij 2004, 72; Grünbart 2005, 233, 269; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 21.

KD 26 To his fellow student Georgios

Psellos repeated his apologetic explanation of the hasty style of KD 25. He also praised Georgios' new style, as shown in a reply received to that letter. Having been a shy and reserved student, Georgios had suddenly surprised Psellos by blossoming into a bold attacker, unexpectedly fighting him in full epistolary combat with a variety of preliminary skirmishes leading to a battle involving the use of all kinds of weapons. Psellos praised his overwhelming force very strongly. [It is clear that he is employing heavy irony.]

Date etc.: c.1038, just after KD 25.

Moore 321: ms K. Ljubarskij 1978, 41; Ljubarskij 2004, 72; Grünbart 2005, 121 n. 361, 268, 319, 325; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 21.

KD 27 To Kyritys [see KD 209 and the three following letters]

KD 28 To Kyritys [see KD 209 and the three following letters]

KD 29 TO CONSTANTINE X DOUKAS

Psellos boldly undertook the difficult task of writing an encomium of Constantine, not cowed either by his brilliant position or his noble character. He was amazed how the emperor could combine the heights of angelic virtue with the uttermost depths of humility. He covered the whole world, attending to every need, great or trivial, of his subjects everywhere. He faced all barbarian enemies, sailing at the same time along the Euphrates and the Danube. He also joined with God in the defence of the capital from the eastern dawn to the western evening. But the culmination of his work as a ruler were his vigils of prayer.

Date etc.: 1059–67.

Moore 316: ms L. Polemis 1968, 33 n. 41; Ljubarskij 1978, 41; Ljubarskij 2004, 172; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10, 241, 303; Jenkins 2006, 148 n. 48; Limousin 2014, 164.

KD 30 To Kekaumenos [see KD 59 and the two following letters]

KD 31 TO CONSTANTINE PROEDROS, NEPHEW
OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Psellos wrote to Constantine, who was on trial on a major charge, over which Psellos feared he would lose him. He did not know how to address his dear and unfortunate friend, and decided to mix consoling words with others showing how he shared his suffering, despite the danger of contradictions. Constantine was a tried and true friend, confidant, and correspondent, whose loss would be terrible. Yet the court where he was on trial seemed both just and merciful. The defendant did not depend on mercy, but bared his soul, and all present, even those who were hostile, could see his innocence. Psellos could only assume that God was concerned to cleanse him from the last hint of impurity, a process surely already achieved by the inscrutable ways of providence. His mother, wife, and children were being put through agonies, a terrible sight, as the kensor pursued the trial. Psellos himself was working in every way to bring a good conclusion, which he hoped would come soon. The emperor was merciful, visibly tending towards acquittal, and the empress pure goodness. The patriarch was Constantine's warm supporter, the *kaisar* [Ioannes] was too distressed to weep, Constantine's brother [Nikephoros] was digging out some serpent's nest. Psellos had not yet done anything worthy of their friendship, but would help with every fibre of his being. He sent good wishes to his friend's family and household, even the kitchen staff.

Date etc.: c.1062 (excursus 10). For the problematic circumstances, see pp. 71–2, 74.

Moore 352: ms L, a⁵. Lambros and Duobouniotes 1922; Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 71; Ljubarskij 1978, 63–5; Volk 1990, 24 n. 87; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 102; Volk 2002; Ljubarskij 2004, 104, 105, 107; Grünbart 2005, 225, 226, 278; Sarres 2005, 46 n. 63, 94 n. 220, 96, 202 n. 42, 265 n. 23, 269 n. 33, 304 n. 135, 387 n. 100; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 109, nn. 13–14; Papaioannou 2013, 30 n. 2; Bernard 2017, 29 n. 31; Jeffreys 2017, 71–2, 74 and n. 43.

KD 32 TO SYNETOS, METROPOLITAN OF BASILAION

Synetos, metropolitan of Basilaion, had written to Psellos and also sent him partridges. Why? Did the birds' wings make the letter lighter, or was there another explanation? Synetos pleaded poverty to Psellos, making him speculate about the agriculture of the see and its potential for animal husbandry. A previous metropolitan had offered him warm baths, a lean, black mare and soft beds. He did not mind if products had changed, but Basilaion at least still produced letters. He hoped that the rough areas of the see would be smoothed out so as to offer all that his correspondent desired. As for Psellos, he needed just his books and their contents. If someone took them from him, he would turn at once to God, from whom nobody would separate him.

Date etc.: undated. The insistence on his books may suggest the insecurity of 1053–6.

Moore 453: ms L, a⁵. Lambros and Duobouniotes 1922; Browning 1975, 9 n. 32; Volk 1990, 25 n. 88; Grünbart 2005, 325, 357; Riedinger 2010, 17–18 (French translation); Papaioannou 2013, 11 n. 28.

KD 33 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos said that he had found considerable advantage in Mauropous' brief letters coming at unpredictable moments. As he tried to reply to their trumpet blasts, the letters acted as tiny vessels deep in his bloodstream, drawing off words, since Mauropous himself had ceased to play that role, and papering over cracks. Yet as times grew less propitious, he complained of failing powers. He mainly meant to ask why Ioannes was so inconsistent. Why did he change his mind so often, choosing to speak or not for no reason? The two friends did not let chance regulate their writings and friendships. Unpleasant events had to be borne: they refined the interplay of soul and body. As Ioannes' late brother died, the holy incense of the departed soul left a strong mark on the surviving body. Psellos knew the brother only superficially, but he seemed a good, straightforward man with a lively intelligence, who had fought well against some ill-fortune. His virtues were clearly visible in Ioannes himself.

Date etc.: c.1049–51, especially if Mauropous (ed. Karpozilos) ep. 60 is a dismissive reply to it.

Moore 165: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 118; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 13, 117 nn. 38–41; Karpozilos 1990, 227–8; Volk 1990, 268 n. 4; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 179; Grünbart 2005, 251; Sarres 2005, 51 n. 86, 98, 181 n. 53, 182 n. 56, 183–5 n. 57, 239–40 nn. 124–5, 279 n. 57; Bernard 2014, 305 n. 46; Lauxtermann 2017, 100 n. 33, 105, 108 n. 62.

KD 34 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos said that Ioannes Mauropous' suffering produced amazing letters, and he could wish the pain would continue if these were the result. Constraint added to his freedom: heavy burdens produced astounding Olympian eloquence. But Ioannes was like a dweller in heaven rhetorically persuading himself that he hated the sight of the unstable stars and planets in the sky and envied those in the motionless fixity of Hades. He wanted to give up stability and happiness in Euchaita for the capital where everything was in constant flux, maybe changing places with Psellos (but not offices—Psellos was no bishop). But (he asked) had not Ioannes just left the Eden of the City, eager to escape and fearing death at court, though not from a serpent? It was now under the sway of the moon, the wonderful Alan princess [mistress of Constantine IX], and twin suns. The Alan's dress was still unsophisticated, but

she had a youthful bloom and mixed virtues, unexpected tact, modesty, and sense of responsibility which outshone the imperial pair. Maybe Ioannes should not depend on Psellos' words, but come to Eden to see for himself and forget Euchaita. As for Ioannes' nephew, his different studies were going well from all available sources, especially those of Psellos, which he judged the best.

Date etc.: c.1049, soon after Mauroπους left the City. The identity of the 'imperial pair' is clear if the letter was written before 1050: Constantine and Zoe. But we are told that the Alan princess was only recognized by Constantine as his mistress after the death of Zoe (1050). But Psellos, an insider in the palace, may here be revealing palace secrets to Mauroπους, an ex-insider. It is harder to think of a later 'imperial pair'—say Constantine IX and Theodora.

Moore 75: ms L. Follieri 1968, 197; Ljubarskij 1973, 43; Weiss 1973, 84 n. 254; Anastasi 1974a, 411 n. 66; Lemerle 1977, 198 n. 5, 207 n. 30; Ljubarskij 1978, 45 n. 11, 46; Karpozilos 1982, 25 n. 17, 36 nn. 82–4, 40 nn. 108–9, 44 n. 140, 113 n. 13, 117 n. 42; Anastasi 1988; Karpozilos 1990, 10 n. 12, 16 n. 38, 17 n. 43, 17 n. 46, 23 nn. 73–4, 253; Volk 1990, 224 n. 14; Kazhdan 1993, 92–5, 98; De Vries-van der Velden 1996, 239–56 (Greek text and French translation); De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 344 n. 74; Chondridou 2002, 238 n. 82; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 78–9 n. 13; Grünbart 2005, 254, 294, 324, 325; Sarres 2005, 96 and n. 224, 177 n. 31; Papaioannou 2012a, 312; Bernard 2017, 27; Lauxtermann 2017, 99 n. 31, 104, 108 n. 59, 123–5 (English translation); FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 35 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION, POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIOS*

Pothos was congratulated by Psellos for good generalship, combining well the twin strategic roles of a thematic *krites*, administering justice and filling his own purse, as firmly recommended and practised by Psellos himself in ministering to the body as well as the soul. As in chariot racing and Platonic theory, philosophy suggested *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, a compromise between two horses or roles. A *grammatikos* working in Opsikion had returned to the capital claiming he had made no money at all, while Pothos, his *krites*, insisted he had made a quite sufficient sum—a difference of opinion offering a typical dilemma for Psellos, acting as he did as a resource for his friends. He believed Pothos—but enough of that. Pothos should be assured that he had in Psellos (as *protoproedros*) a most favourable supporter in written and oral advocacy before the emperor.

Date etc.: nw c.1065 (excursuses 5, 9, and 16.5). Psellos became *proedros* at the accession of Isaakios I, and was promoted from *protoproedros* at the accession of Nikephoros Botaneiates. When did he rise from *proedros* to *protoproedros*? During the mid 1160s. Does he in this letter announce his promotion?

Moore 486: ms L. Weiss 1973, 122 n. 412, 146 n. 495; Ljubarskij 1978, 30 n. 30, 102; Volk 1990, 227 n. 30; Cheynet 1999, 239 n. 22; Limousin 1999, 357 n. 49, 360 n. 56; Ljubarskij 2004, 54 n. 36, 155, 156–7; Grünbart 2005, 85 n. 61, 268, 294, 324; Sarres 2005, 121 n. 50, 126 n. 68; Jenkins 2006, 143 n. 31; O'Meara 2012, 155 n. 3; Papaioannou 2013, 37 n. 29, 150 n. 70.

KD 36 TO THE MONKS NIKETAS AND IOANNES

Psellos wrote to defend himself from the suspicion of pride and contempt for those who were less learned than himself, claiming that he was very conscious of the sins which troubled his conscience. By contrast, he greeted the Chiot monks Niketas and Ioannes [founders of Nea Mone], who should be praised for their innate goodness, their total dedication to the monastic life and the depth of their theology. Yet these positive characteristics had not saved them from suffering. The letter may in fact be read as a friendly and sympathetic consolation for a great and undeserved loss. He returned to his own case, and again contrasted the weight of his sins and the small positive achievements he had to his name. He took leave of them in a monastic way, and thanked them for their gift of mastic, sign of a need to chew things over before speech or action.

Date etc.: 1055–7, if the loss was the most serious we know that they suffered, that of Nea Mone, the monastery they founded, confiscated by Theodora, but later returned with the aid of Michael Keroularios.

Moore 205: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Karpozilos 1984, 30 n. 139; Tinnefeld 1989, 118–20; Angold 1994, 240 n. 50; Angold 1995, 33 n. 36; Angold 1998, 236 n. 62; Koder 1998, 147 n. 114; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 337 n. 57; Ljubarskij 2004, 151; Grünbart 2005, 314; Kaldellis 2007, 216 n. 81; Limousin 2014, 171 n. 44, 46; Jeffreys 2017a, 56.

KD 37 To Nikolaos Skleros [see KD 44 and the three following letters]

KD 38 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIOS*

Pothos, like a new Zeus, was now in a position to govern Psellos, himself a philosophical deity. He could add and subtract tax for Psellos and others. Psellos announced that he held a new monastery, Trapeza, as *charistikarios*, in common with two others, making up a ‘mule area’. The other names were in the register, and should be followed up for their contributions. [The rest of the letter makes a joke that Pothos is forcing Psellos into the cavalry.] Pothos had also become a military commander, exercising the cavalry and leading it into battle. Psellos was incompetent with spear and bow, and useless on horseback. Pothos should avoid trying to make him a cavalryman, as he would disturb the ranks and might run away and take many others with him. He was out of place in war. His knowledge of Homeric formations would be of little use. The authorities should take the horse he owed and leave him alone.

Date etc.: nw probably 1060–6 (excursus 5). For Trapeza, see pp. 55–6. Michael Angold wonders whether the ‘mule area’ was a property on which military *corvées* could be levied, but not military service.

Moore 129: ms L. Weiss 1973, 147 n. 497–8; Ljubarskij 1978, 28, 102; Volk 1990, 3 n. 3, 227 n. 30; Oikonomides 1996, 99 n. 80, 102 n. 88, 104 n. 104; Cheynet 1999, 239 n. 23; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 157; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 319, 225; Bernard 2017, 30–1; Jeffreys 2017a, 52, 55; MICHAEL ANGOLD; ROSEMARY MORRIS.

KD 39 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIOS*

Psellos informed Pothos that Atzikome and Thyrides, neighbouring villages in Pothos' theme [Opsikion?], had long been disputing over land, and had often come to blows. The leaders on both sides had now, after much discussion, sometimes acrimonious, decided to put their cases to an arbitrator and treat his decision as binding on both sides. They had come to the capital to approach the emperor as arbitrator. But as he was busy on something else, they went on to Psellos, who was passing the problem on to Pothos. The story resembled the foundation of the Delphic oracle, but there must be one important difference: Pothos' report must be absolutely plain and need no interpretation. It must be as successful as the fire used by Herakles to cauterize the heads of the Hydra, so that the dispute would not recur.

Date etc.: nw probably 1060–6 (excursuses 5 and 16.4).

Moore 167: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 74 n. 5; Weiss 1973, 59 n. 183, 96 n. 301, 138 n. 466; Ljubarskij 1978, 28, 102, 110; Volk 1990, 227 n. 30; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 157, 168; Grünbart 2005, 174 nn. 319 and 321, 225.

KD 40 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos once had enjoyed Ioannes *kaisar* making dutiful daily visits, feeling his warmth regularly like the sun. But now Ioannes seldom appeared, like a constellation seen only at intervals. A constant pleasure had been replaced by delight involving a rarity factor, as was Ioannes' right. But Psellos had Ioannes in the depths of his heart and could bring him out and enjoy him whenever he wished, day or night, beyond all beauty—and these were not just fine words, but the sincere utterance of his soul. The delightful gift of truffles he would eat with pleasure, not only for themselves, but as a link to Ioannes' table. However, the letter and its familiar greeting were the most important things.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 6).

Moore 9: ms L. Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 31; Volk 1990, 273 n. 17; Grünbart 2005, 262, 277; Bernard 2011a, 4 n. 10; Chernoglazov 2011, 58 n. 11.

KD 41 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIOS*

Psellos spoke to Pothos of Zeus' pitchers containing good and bad fortune: he hoped that his friend, whose fortune had been generally good, would accept the current bad fortune to balance the ledger and guard against envy. He told Pothos that his letter had arrived too late in the evening to be presented at the palace. Psellos took it in the next morning as the first item of business and led

an orchestrated response of the court, with Pothos' uncle weeping as it was read to the emperor by his secretary. His uncle was so emotional that he was unable to speak in the discussion which followed. The emperor was filled with pity: though there was no immediate decision, Pothos' enemies would be punished to show the imperial anger they had roused. Pothos should quietly consolidate the gains made, especially with his uncle.

Date etc.: nw 1060–6 (excursuses 2 and 14). The scene resembles others connected with Constantine X.

Moore 469: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 102; Volk 1990, 227 n. 30; Ljubarskij 2004, 157–8; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 319, 225, 257.

KD 42 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIOS*

Early scientific discoveries, Psellos said, arose from physical observation, in the fields of geometry (in Egypt), arithmetic (in Phoenicia), and music. The emperor was bringing Pothos, son of the *droungarios*, into this scientific framework by asking him to measure out land disputed between the land-owner Drimys and some villagers. In this he would be helped by the study of geometrical shapes he had undertaken with Psellos. Pothos could decide for himself which of the sciences to follow: Psellos would support him if he ignored astrology. He needed to pass on to Drimys some of his own sweetness and tame him, for his name [meaning Bitter] was quite appropriate.

Date etc.: nw probably 1060–6 (excursuses 5 and 16.4).

Moore 283: ms L. Weiss 1973, 51 n. 156; Ljubarskij 1978, 103; Volk 1990, 227 n. 30; Ljubarskij 2004, 157; Grünbart 2005, 294; Bernard 2017, 20, 22.

KD 43 TO [...], *DOUX* OF ANTIOCH

Psellos wrote to the *doux* of Antioch that letters reaching the capital from Antioch showed dramatic changes of fortune which must be providential, preparing heroes to fight coming waves of trouble, as Psellos often said. One letter showed desperate problems from powerful enemies, whether already attacking, biding their time, or showing contempt or audacity. There was grave danger Antioch would be captured, amid open warfare, with no hope of salvation. The next letter announced sudden release from trouble and unexpected peace. The mind, if independent from the body, had great power. The *doux* complained of the effort of steering his vessel safely against great odds: but that was his mark of distinction. Then there was the ambassador from Aleppo: Psellos recounted the whole scene. The emperor sat in special state, and the envoy came in, well escorted. After doing obeisance he

answered questions put to him, then turned the subject to warm praise of the *doux*. After the text of the treaty was read with its vital extension, Psellos too praised the *doux* at length. This might have no short-term effect on him, but would improve his long-term prospects. Psellos thought him the only solution for the general control of affairs. He hoped the *doux* would reflect some glory on him too.

Date etc.: nw c.1061–6. See excursus 16.4. The name of the *doux* has been effaced. Todt, observing the evidence from an Antiochene perspective, identifies this troubled period in the history of Syria as the early 1060s. The emperor concerned must be Constantine X, and the *doux* should be identified as Nikephoritzes. He was well-known to Psellos, and a civilian administrator doing a job traditionally assigned to a soldier (see KD 62). He spent two ill-defined periods in Antioch during the reign of Constantine X.

Moore 250: ms L. Todt 2005, 607 nn. 29–30; Grünbart 2005, 170 n. 278, 222, 360; Sarres 2005, 94 n. 220, 425–6 n. 50; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6; KLAUS-PETER TODT.

THE RETIREMENT OF NIKOLAOS SKLEROS (4 LETTERS)

The narrative of Nikolaos' retirement will have covered a year or two during the reign of Constantine X.

KD 44 To Nikolaos Skleros

In his attempts to arrange the retirement of Nikolaos Skleros, Psellos' first letter announced failure. As Psellos had himself seen, the effect of lightening strikes on people is completely unpredictable, differing from one to another, and in the same way an argument which persuaded one person might have no effect on another. Different cultures and philosophies similarly saw natural events and arguments in different ways. Nikolaos' words and those of Psellos himself were good, and could draw tears from adamant. Yet even in mythology, the strongest of weapons were not always successful. The time was not propitious. Nikolaos and Psellos had both attacked the emperor's defences and shaken them, and they had been given reason to hope. But Nikolaos' plans to succeed at the first attempt were too ambitious and he must be patient, not demanding the fulfilment of all his hopes at once.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 2).

Moore 99: ms L. Seibt 1976, 95; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23, 109 n. 37; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106–7; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 60, 361 n. 74; Ljubarskij 2004, 162–3, 167; Bernard 2017, 21 n. 33.

[KD 37] To Nikolaos Skleros, *proedros*

In a second letter about Nikolaos' retirement, Psellos welcomed a most charming letter Nikolaos had sent, fit to rival mythological or biblical

equivalents. But the times were against him: even Orpheus could not succeed under present circumstances. Constantine X, though a very gentle man who could often be charmed, was going through a military crisis, and at that moment could only be charmed by arms dealers. He was blind to all else. Psellos thus kept Nikolaos' letter in reserve for future use, but had himself charmed Ioannes the *kaisar* (who wept copiously), preparing a double assault on the emperor's ears in alliance with him.

Date etc.: nw c.1064 (excursuses 2 and 14). The military crisis was probably the invasion of the Uzes.

Moore 476: ms L. Seibt 1976, 94; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23, 109 n. 37; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106–7; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 60, 361 n. 73; Ljubarskij 2004, 162–3; Grünbart 2005, 218, 357; Bernard 2014, 295; Bernard 2017, 21 n. 32.

[KD 63] To Nikolaos Skleros

n a further letter Psellos claimed to be willing to make any sacrifice, risking exile or worse, in his attempts to help Nikolaos, but he had not yet delivered full results. Such was his devotion to a brother and friend, a man of similar education who knew what it was to share others' grief and let others share his own. Psellos was able to announce some preliminary success: he had skilfully used Nikolaos' emotional letter to work on Constantine X. The emperor was moved almost to tears, but as was his wont he did not solve all the problems at once. He gave Nikolaos leave not to go to his jurisdiction of Aegean Sea but to his estate of Mitza Kathara, promising (but not sending) an imperial letter, without confirming the grant of the estate. Psellos assured Nikolaos that both these things would occur, as the emperor gave his word and told Psellos to write to Nikolaos. The latter would presumably be happy, and should send a simple letter of thanks requesting confirmation, and Psellos would continue his pressure on both counts. Psellos' letter was written simply, but no sophistry was needed in writing to an unfortunate man.

Date etc.: nw c.1065 (excursuses 2, 14 and 16.4).

Moore 107: ms L. Seibt 1976, 93–7; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106; Koder 1998, 51 n. 18; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 75; Ljubarskij 2004, 162; Grünbart 2005, 85 n. 61; Sarres 2005, 65 n. 127, 92 n. 214, 93 n. 219, 420 n. 31; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 21 n. 31, 22.

[KD 56] To Nikolaos Skleros

Psellos was finally able to console Nikolaos (if that was possible) with the news that he was no longer *krites* of Aegean Sea. When Constantine X heard Psellos reading the wise letter Nikolaos had sent him, emphasizing

its emotional content at every turn, he immediately approved his request with deep sympathy. The document would not show this: the emperor rarely matched his words to his feelings, so as not to embolden the applicant. But he certainly was affected and changed colour—a sure indication. Further, Constantine often asked for details of Nikolaos' confiscated estate (details of a relevant imperial decision would follow). Nikolaos' grief needed more radical surgery before healing could begin. God who cared for men's souls and bodies knew the right time to apply different forms of treatment; Nikolaos should wait patiently in bed till God acted, but should not neglect partial solutions till a complete cure was achieved.

Date etc.: nw c.1065 (excursuses 2 and 14).

Moore 109: ms L. Seibt 1976, 94–5; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23, 109 n. 37; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 60; Ljubarskij 2004, 162, 166; Grünbart 2005, 219, 220, 347; Sarres 2005, 93 n. 219, 127 n. 74; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 21 n. 34.

KD 45 TO IOANNES, METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

The initial subject of the letter was the linguistic problem of communication at a distance by letter, recognizing that this is an activity needing skill and practice. It was also not done in the language of direct speech, but in a heightened register of the language, which was brilliant and harmonious but had a distressing tendency to obscure the sense. One may master the different registers just as a sprinter can also walk. But the immediate cause for Psellos' letter was a rumour that his old friend Mauropous planned to retire from the see of Euchaita. He asked about his health and state of mind, whether he found it painful to govern others and constantly think and make decisions in the public eye. He knew his friend's preference for quiet and seclusion, when his mind and education were made for governing and controlling both bodies and souls. He firmly advised against retirement, which was as inconceivable for a bishop as for a runner to abandon the stadium or the soldier his formation. He finally wished him a comfortable old age.

Date etc.: maybe 1064–6, as Mauropous grew older, towards the end of the reign of Constantine X.

Moore 149: ms L. Lemerle 1977, 200 n. 12; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6, 45; Karpozilos 1982, 27 n. 30, 46 n. 149, 113 n. 13; Karpozilos 1990, 23 n. 73, 24 n. 82; Volk 1990, 6 n. 7; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 98; Chondridou 2002, 214 n. 237; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 73, 78; Grünbart 2005, 160 nn. 203–4, 201 n. 22, 217, 347; Sarres 2005, 396 n. 27; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2014, 203 n. 136; Bernard 2017, 19; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 109 n. 66, 110.

KD 46 TO IOANNES, METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos suggested to Mauropous that true *philia* must always be measured by quality, not results, and by peaks of affectionate activity, not troughs. Psellos' power to help his friends was only moderate, but he would do his best to assist Mauropous. His axe of rhetorical persuasion was keenly sharpened, but it could not cut everything, as there were trees that could withstand Varangian axes. Sometimes, despite Mauropous' impatience, he was powerless to act. He could only concentrate his attention on the emperor, wait for the right moment when he was receptive, and then impress Mauropous' case upon him.

Date etc.: probably 1060–7 (cf. excursuses 6, 14 and 17). The emperor whose receptive moods must be awaited with care was probably Constantine X.

Moore 471: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 46 n. 12; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 13, 117 n. 42; Karpozilos 1990, 23 nn. 73 and 75; Volk 1990, 6 n. 7; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 99; Ljubarskij 2004, 80; Grünbart 2005, 220, 252; Lauxtermann 2017, 110.

KD 47 TO THE *KRITES* OF KIBYRRAIOTON, BROTHER OF THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

The *krites* of Kibyrraioton had a very low opinion of the inhabitants of his theme. But Psellos wrote to him suggesting that not everyone from Kibyrraioton was bad. Philosophy tells us that every quality has some admixture of its opposite, with a tendency to join with it. For example, the bad contains some good and the good some bad. There was a good minority even in Kibyrraioton. Take a particular bishop from the theme: choose his best words and traits, ignore the rest, dress him in the words of Psellos' praise like Patroklos in Achilles' brilliant armour, and, though despising his background, you can admire him.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7. A cleverly made letter suggesting maturity. Cf. KD 50.

Moore 504: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 135 n. 2; Lemerle 1977, 198 n. 5; Karpozilos 1982, 25 n. 15; Karpozilos 1990, 10 n. 8; Cheynet 1999, 234 n. 6; Limousin 1999, 360 nn. 56 and 61, 362 n. 79; Grünbart 2005, 220.

KD 48 TO KALOKYROS

Psellos wrote to Kalokyros, an exiled petitioner, claiming that there was no means of lobbying Constantine X he had not tried: speaking to him at a propitious time, planning out his approach, and starting the conversation elsewhere and bringing it round to Kalokyros. He had even approached

him after the liturgy when he might be specially disposed to clemency for Kalokyros—and others. The emperor often seemed set to show mercy and bring an end to his punishment, but did not decide to do so at once. He had Kalokyros' letter read, and was deeply moved, so the exile would not spend much longer away from home.

Date etc.: nw 1060–6 (excursus 14). The scenario resembles others connected with Constantine X. **Moore 514:** ms L. Grünbart 2005, 199 n. 11, 355; Jeffreys 2017, 72 n. 36.

KD 49 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF NIKOMEDIA

Psellos told the metropolitan of Nikomedia that he would love to do for him all he wanted, and wished that his power to help his friends was as great as his will. But he had not yet succeeded in the metropolitan's request. It would have happened at once if it depended on him, but as it was, the result was in the lap of the gods, as Psellos' persuasive tongue was now less effective than before. The metropolitan had all Psellos' rhetorical charm at his disposal, but it had not yet met a receptive hearing.

Date etc.: nw probably c.1064–5 (excursus 6). The blunt statement of his ineffectiveness probably dates the letter after the middle of Constantine X's reign.

Moore 46: ms L. Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 223; Grünbart 2005, 252; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66.

KD 50 TO THE *KRITES* OF KIBYRRAIOTON

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Kibyrraioton about the estate of the deceased Theodoros Alopas, a Rhodian but born in the capital and a trusted friend of Psellos. He had left his children and their property to Psellos' care. Psellos was doing all he could to show that this was a wise decision. The *krites* should help the children over Theodoros' ancestral property in Rhodes, protecting his inheritance for Psellos' sake and restoring the lost estates and the young animals stolen by neighbouring villagers, which would need judicial action by the *krites*. Thus he would show what a philosopher had entered the legal profession. Help offered to Theodoros' kin would be in the fine tradition of *kritai* and worthy of his correspondent's goodness, as would a kind welcome for the inhabitants of their estates—which his friend would give without a request.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The legal summary suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 230: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 135 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 63 nn. 197–8; Gautier 1976a, 97 n. 42; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 101; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1304; Grünbart 2005, 225; Bernard 2017, 38.

KD 51 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPTIMATON

He told the *krites* of Optimaton that it was not too bad when a largely fortunate man suffered a minor misfortune. But it was disastrous when a poor man was in danger of losing the little he had. An example was an impoverished friend, a landowner who had been left with one small and unproductive estate in Optimaton. The local villagers were behaving with the usual aggression towards him. If such actions were illegal, the *krites* must enforce the law, help the victim, and free him from his evil neighbours.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The judicial details, though limited, suggest a late date.
Moore 356: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 179; Grünbart 2005, 289.

KD 52 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPTIMATON

A friend from the capital, Psellos said in a letter, had warned him about a man from a village in Optimaton, who had been wronged by the people of another village over a land dispute [name and toponyms suppressed]. Psellos, concerned to help the victim if he could, asked the *krites* to investigate whether there was substance in the complaint and to give the man his due. He should establish justice, show he was a friend of Psellos, and lay up credit in heaven for his just decisions.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Similar details to KD 51.

Moore 501: ms L. Weiss 1973, 61 n. 191; Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Karpozilos 1990, 209; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267, 281 n. 1273; Ljubarskij 2004, 180.

KD 53 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE *DROUNGARIA*

Psellos told Pothos that the problem of a demeaning and adversative encounter over tax between ex-teacher and pupil, both philosophers, had been solved. Pothos no longer had to demand the *monoprosopon* levy from Psellos as owner of a monastery. The emperor had cancelled the tax in this case, forestalling what Pothos would have done himself, saving the educated principals in the transaction the problem of its philosophical justification. Psellos asked Pothos to speak to the *hegoumenos* of the monastery, [as *krites*], and assure him of his *philia* and support, as God did to Israel. In this way the *hegoumenos* would have secure confidence for the future.

Date etc.: 1061–7 (excursuses 5 and 16.4). The monastery is unnamed, but Psellos' investment is described as a half-mule area, so it may well be Trapeza (see pp. 55–6), one of his later acquisitions.

Moore 455: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 5–6 n. 7; Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Weiss 1973, 147 n. 499; Saradi 1995, 192 n. 130; Oikonomides 1996, 102 n. 91, 104 n. 104; Grünbart 2005, 179 n. 359, 295; Bernard 2017, 31, 39–40 (English translation); Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

SUPPORT FOR A YOUNG *KRITES* OF ARMENIAKON,
PROBABLY PSELLOS' SON-IN-LAW (5 LETTERS)

At around the same time, Psellos wrote five striking letters of recommendation for the same young and inexperienced krites of Armeniakon (see excursus 3). Eva de Vries-Van der Velden dates this episode credibly to c.1059, soon after Constantine Leichoudes replaced Keroularios as patriarch.

KD 54 To the metropolitan of Euchaita

Psellos wrote to Ioannes Mauropous about a *krites* [of Armeniakon]. The man was to play a role of philosophical mediator, a present reality to bring Psellos (the lesser being) and Mauropous (the greater) closer together. Some details of the role are unclear. Psellos told Mauropous to rejoice in welcoming another Psellos to Euchaita, fulfilling (indirectly and philosophically) long-cherished hopes and dreams of meeting again. The *krites* was essentially Psellos himself [probably Psellos' son-in-law]. But he was anxious about the young man on his journey, which was dangerous both by land and sea. The times greatly increased the danger: with the capital itself unstable, disaster threatened in Armeniakon. Would Ioannes please look after him? He had considerable natural ability improved by Psellos' teaching. With the wisdom and knowledge in which Psellos completely trusted, would Mauropous please help him steer aright the ship of his career?

Date etc.: nw 1058–60 (excursuses 3 and 16).

Moore 364: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 48; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 13; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 98; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 115–18 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 82; Grünbart 2005, 254, 293; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71; Bernard 2017, 34, 35 n. 93; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 109.

[S 80] To the metropolitan of Euchaita

After an elaborate, encomiastic greeting, Psellos told Mauropous that men from Euchaita came to the capital like wolves ravening against their metropolitan. But Psellos silenced them, amazing the emperor by the contrast between initial fierceness and later docility. Psellos did even more for his friend: he turned the emperor's mind in his favour, so that instead of sharing the men's accusations against Mauropous, he praised him. He admired the letter he sent, which was like those of the ancients.

Psellos wanted him to have the news at once, since he would find nothing relevant in the official correspondence. He complained that in the current crisis Mauropous, not only the leading light of the current holy synod but of past ages too, should be badly slandered, judged by tittle-tattle not by innate quality, not by what he did but by what people said of him. But the emperor put things right. However, in all this he had forgotten the *krites*: was he behaving well, showing the imprint of Psellos' teaching? If so, he should be honoured, if not, punished. If not punished, Mauropous should teach him his own fine qualities, so on his return he would show more of Mauropous than of Psellos himself.

Date etc.: nw 1058–60 (excursus 3).

Moore 401: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 93–6 (partial Russian translation), 181–2; Ljubarskij 1978, 48; Karpozilos 1982, 44 n. 141, 45 n. 144, 113 n. 13, 122 n. 67–8; Karpozilos 1990, 23 nn. 73–6, 243, 251; Kazhdan 1993, 92–3, 99; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 117 (partial French translation), 120 n. 32; Ljubarskij 2004, 80, 82; Grünbart 2005, 284, 356; Bernard 2017, 34 n. 92, 35; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 109.

[KD 58] To the metropolitan of Amaseia

Psellos wrote to the metropolitan of Amaseia about the new *krites* of Armeniakon, who was Psellos himself, despite his different appearance. He should be welcomed as Psellos. Perhaps he was a better man than he, as his naturally fine character had been enhanced by Psellos' teaching. He had been taught to think of the metropolitan as his greatest friend. Despite the *krites'* name [probably Maleses, with reference to cape Maleas in Lakonia], he merited a Sybaritic, not Lakonian welcome.

Date etc.: nw 1058–60 (excursus 3).

Moore 402: ms L. Weiss 1973, 63 n. 199; Gautier 1975, 327; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 113, 125–6; Ljubarskij 2004, 166; Grünbart 2005, 341, 347; Bernard 2017, 34, 35.

[S 35] To the metropolitan of Amaseia

The great metropolitan of Amaseia, synkellos, pre-eminent in nobility, learning, holiness, and piety, despite all this refused to write to Psellos, even a few words. He would not report on the *krites* of Armeniakon, his nephew and Psellos' son. If the report was good, as expected, the man would need no discipline, but any infringement should be firmly punished. However Psellos was confident that his education had made him worthy of honours rather than chastisement. It would be desirable for him to win the metropolitan's praise, in a timely way, to the right audience. For Sabbaites had severely abused him, as well as the metropolitan, Psellos (though he was far away), the emperor and God himself. He battered heaven and earth,

clashing against stones and rocks. Psellos was the first to close his ears to the attacks, or rather listen to them and smile. Sabbaites should be careful of kicking against the pricks, or his legs would be badly lacerated.

Date etc.: nw 1058–60 (excursuses 3 and 16).

Moore 291: mss P, L, V, v⁴. Weiss 1973, 24 n. 72; Gautier 1975, 327; Ljubarskij 1978, 100; Karpozilos 1982, 101 n. 158; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 111, 113–14, 118–20, 125; Ljubarskij 2004, 153; Grünbart 2005, 356; Kaldellis 2007, 213 n. 72; Bernard 2014, 281; Bernard 2017, 34 n. 90, 35.

[KD 57] To the metropolitan of Neokaisareia

Psellos assumed that, as an admirer who praised Psellos' works, the metropolitan of Neokaisareia would give a warm and affectionate welcome to the young *krites* of Armeniakon, a living image of Psellos [probably his son-in-law]. He asked him to play the role of second charioteer driving the young man, stressing his youth for assuming the role of *krites*, and his mature character and education, calling him exactly the man the metropolitan would want. He should protect him as a valuable treasure, particularly guarding him from insects that attack fine young wood. The first charioteer would be one of Psellos' oldest and wisest friends, and his correspondent would only be needed for an occasional tightening or loosening of the reins, when necessary. He was sure he would accept the charge out of *philia*, and hoped that the two of them would remember Psellos when dining together.

Date etc.: nw 1058–60 (excursus 3). The first charioteer for the young man was Maupous at Euchaita: see KD 54.

Moore 487: ms L. Drexel 1941, 309; Gautier 1975, 327; Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88, 187 n. 101; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 114–15 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 182; Papaioannou 2006a, 96 n. 3; Bernard 2017, 35 n. 96.

KD 55 TO THE KRITES OF KATOTIKA

Psellos wrote to a close friend, the *krites* of Katotika, rather amused at his overdefensive reaction to a previous letter. The man had tried to vindicate himself in a combative way, as if under stern judicial attack, but in fact nobody had condemned him. What is more, he had Psellos' energetic support everywhere, and nobody he spoke to disagreed. He mentioned that he had Psellos in his thoughts: indeed, it would be surprising if he did not. Psellos had not congratulated him on his promotion to *vestarches*, not wanting to appear ironic. Psellos did praise him for preserving his own high opinion of him. The *krites* alone knew how he was doing in Katotika. He should keep his good

reputation, and if he made some money at the same time, he would deserve double congratulations.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.5). The advice at the end of the letter probably dates it after 1060.

Moore 368: ms L. Duyé 1972, 168 n. 8, 169 n. 13, 171 n. 25, 172 n. 27, 174 n. 41; Ljubarskij 1978, 107; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 132–3, 147–9 (Greek text and French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 163; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 63; Grünbart 2005, 221, 243.

KD 56 To Nikolaos Skleros [see KD 44 and the three following letters]

KD 57 To the metropolitan of Neokaisareia [see KD 54 and the four following letters]

KD 58 To the metropolitan of Amaseia [see KD 54 and the four following letters]

KEKAUMENOS: LIFE AS A MONK AND
UNPAID SALARY (3 LETTERS)

At the end of a distinguished military career [involving disfiguring wounds that nearly killed him], Katakalon Kekaumenos decided to be tonsured. He received from Psellos routine advice on his new life. He complained that his salary as kouropalates had not been paid: but Psellos could not help, and offered hypocritical words recommending monkish poverty. It is uncertain whether the salary should have been paid. Perhaps the new monk had made a miscalculation of his rights? He was also asked, as an inhabitant of Koloneia, to help the local metropolitan with his difficult flock.

KD 59 To Kekaumenos

Katakalon Kekaumenos had written to Psellos announcing that he had become a monk, and complaining that he had not received from Constantine X his due salary as *kouropalates*. Psellos congratulated him on his decision and on the wonderful change to earthly poverty which would lead to heavenly riches. He praised the spiritual frame of mind visible in the letter, as he sloughed off his old earthly body and put on a new heavenly one. He hoped that no worldly demons would disturb his monastic tranquillity, divinely defended, because he had chosen the narrow path rather than the broader one. He added that Kekaumenos should take action himself over non-payment of his salary as *kouropalates* (which, he claimed, was not due to the emperor's meanness). As the patriarch [Constantine Leichoudes] could not help, Kekaumenos must act in person.

Date etc.: after 1057, probably c.1061. Kekaumenos' tonsure may have occurred at any date after 1057, but the early years of Constantine X are often suggested. Mention of the patriarch would be unlikely between the arrest of Keroularios (late 1058) and the consecration of Leichoudes (February 1059).

Moore 444: ms L. Litavrin 1969, 461–2 (Russian translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 37 n. 2; Savvidis 1986–7; Shepard 1992, 176 n. 15, 179 n. 25; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 67 n. 2; Grünbart 2005, 228; Papaioannou 2012a, 312; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

[KD 141] To Kekaumenos

Psellos congratulated Katakalon Kekaumenos as a brave monk, fighting for God on many fronts, achieving victory when showing his nobility in great adversity. It was a triumph that the emperor of this world had withheld money due to him, which would be repaid many times in the next. He should rejoice at failure in this world, because of the compensations in eternity. Psellos told him of the noble failure of his man [probably in demanding Kekaumenos' salary as *kouropalates*], despite his hard work. He had done his best, applying pressure in every way, using every available tactic to convince Constantine X, the patriarch [Constantine Leichoudes] and especially Psellos himself. But times were against him, making success impossible. He would have left early, had Psellos not kept him there with promises till the right time.

Date etc.: after 1057, probably c.1061.

Moore 246: ms L. Litavrin 1969, 462 (Russian translation); Savvidis 1986–7; Shepard 1992, 176 n. 15, 179 n. 25; Ljubarskij 2004, 67 n. 2; Sarres 2005, 94–5 n. 220, 212 n. 8, 272 n. 44; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

[KD 30] To Katakalon Kekaumenos

Psellos gave Katakalon Kekaumenos (at the latter's request) stereotypical advice on life as a monk, having been a close friend and trusted adviser of his before his tonsure. He recommended devotion to divine love, as fulfilling God's will and promoting peace with his neighbours. He also tried to reconcile his correspondent with the metropolitan of Koloneia, wondering why Kekaumenos, who had praised that churchman in the past, had changed his mind. The metropolitan complained of lack of support from Kekaumenos in his vital role of governing his difficult flock. Psellos warned Kekaumenos not to take the slightest heed of idle gossip, stressing the need for continuing friendship on all sides, supporting the metropolitan against those who wished him ill. He reminded him of his duty to spread peace and avoid injustice, especially in areas where, as an old general, he had special influence. Despite the fact that Kekaumenos was from Koloneia, he mentioned the bad reputation of the local people. Psellos

ended by referring to his own role as the metropolitan's teacher and Kekaumenos' experience of himself as an ambassador for peace.

Date etc.: after 1057, probably c.1061.

Moore 239: ms L. Litavrin 1969, 459–61 (Russian translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 37 n. 2; Savvidis 1986–7; Shepard 1992, 176 n. 15, 179 n. 25; Ljubarskij 2004, 67 n. 2; Grünbart 2005, 216, 290; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

KD 60 TO THE *KRITES* OF AEGEAN SEA

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Aegean Sea, starting with a word game in which he in the capital and the *krites* in the Aegean were often together. He asked how the *krites* was and what he was doing—though he already knew, by the power of *philia*. He asked a favour for Petronas and the Pyrgenoi, estate-managers of the Homonoia monastery, whose owner was Anna Radene, *patrikia zoste*, an old friend of Psellos via Constantine IX. There was another claimant to the monastery, with apparently deficient title. The small favour was that his claims should be rejected. This would build up (non-erotic) credit with Anna for Psellos.

Date etc.: nw c.1060–1 (excursuses 2 and 16.2). After 1054, perhaps just before the Lizix-Skleros group.

Moore 406: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 132–3 n. 5; Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106; Koder 1998, 51 n. 18; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 281 n. 1273, 289 n. 1297; Ljubarskij 2004, 161; Cheynet 2008, 166 n. 23, 167; Jeffreys 2017a, 56; ZACHARY CHITWOOD.

KD 61 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

The *krites* of Thrakesion was unhappy over issues of promotion and dismissal. Psellos thus began his letter with an attempt to make him laugh, joking about the word 'Moschos' (the name of one of his *notarioi*, of Indian origin). He wondered whether the man had an exotic fragrance, or whether one of his parents was a deer (better question his mother). Psellos asked the *krites* to examine Moschos and check his own view that he was a faithful and un-demanding servant, using discipline to improve him if necessary. Psellos did not command his friends, but made requests of them as equals; if successful, he expressed his thanks, especially to the noble and noble-hearted *krites*.

Date etc.: nw after 1060 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.4). Discussion of *notarioi* and mechanisms of *philia* make an earlier date unlikely. 'Moschos' in Greek means the perfume musk, or a young animal, like a deer.

Moore 199: ms L. Weiss 1973, 119 nn. 398–9 (partial German translation); Gautier 1975, 326; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Volk 1990, 274–5; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1298; Ljubarskij 2004, 160; Grünbart 2005, 352; Bernard 2017, 36.

KD 62 TO THE *DOUX* OF ANTIOCH

Psellos was frantic with worry and eager for any news of the *doux*. He told him that in this heightened state he was having vivid dreams of him fighting battles and encouraged by seeming to see him win a victory. Psellos and the emperor were confident this was an omen, and he was ready with a full victory encomium or an embellished update of the present text. He congratulated him that, though untried, he had quickly succeeded where professional soldiers had failed for years, as Psellos had said to the emperor, boasting proudly of his friend's success. There had been no time to complete the request the *doux* had sent him, since the present reply had been sent immediately on receipt of his letter.

Date etc.: c.1061–3. See excursus 16.4. Todt identifies the troubled period in the history of Antioch described in KD 43 as the early 1060s. The emperor concerned must be Constantine X; the *doux* of this letter, who was well-known to Psellos, a civilian administrator doing a job traditionally assigned to a soldier, must be Nikephoritzes.

Moore 263: ms L. Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Grünbart 2005, 170 n. 278; Todt 2005, 608 nn. 32–3; KLAUS-PETER TODT.

KD 63 To Nikolaos Skleros [see KD 44 and the three following letters]

THE *BASILIKOS* OF MADYTOS (4 LETTERS)

This series of letters narrating the problems of the basilikos of Madytos begins some time after the death of Constantine IX and ends in the reign of Constantine X: it covers three distinct dates, and its duration may be estimated at around four years, say 1058–62.

KD 64 (= S 192) To the *krites* of Thrace and Macedonia

Psellos informed the *krites* of a situation he might already know. He regularly each year chose the same man (carrier of the present letter) for the position of *basilikos* of Madytos, which the late Constantine IX had placed in his gift by an imperial letter. The *basilikos* was an honest and straightforward man who did not harm others, and was therefore exposed to being harmed himself. His post was in natural conflict and competition

with that of the *tourmarches* of Haplokonnesos. The previous *tourmarches* had usurped some of the rights of the *basilikos*, and had been dismissed. The new *tourmarches* needed careful monitoring, in case he followed the bad example and also overstepped his powers. Psellos appealed to the *krites*, son of an excellent father, to stop any trouble in a just way, as soon as it occurred, as befitted a man whom he knew to be of the finest character.

Date etc.: nw c.1058–62: Psellos is *proedros* (see S 165, written around the same time).

Moore 232: mss P, L, U, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 24–6 (Russian translation); Dölger 1925, 1995, no. 908; Ostrogorsky 1958, 99; Ostrogorsky and Grégoire 1958, 241–2; Ahrweiler 1960, 51 n. 4, 73 n. 2, 73 n. 5; Lemerle 1967, 90–1; Weiss 1973, 17 n. 44, 133 n. 441; Ljubarskij 1978, 28; Saradi 1995, 171 n. 24; Kyriazopoulos 1997, 200 n. 727; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 66; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 54; Grünbart 2005, 64 n. 36, 172 n. 304, 178 n. 347, 222, 292, 293, 301; Külzer 2008, 501 n. 18; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 117 n. 31, 124 nn. 85–6; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27.

[S 165] To the *magistros* and *strategos* of Abydos

Constantine IX had given Psellos earlier by chrysobull the right to appoint the *basilikos* of Madytos. Despite stiff competition, he regularly chose the same man. The position of *basilikos* was naturally in competition with that of the *tourmarches* of Haplokonnesos, and the last *tourmarches* had been dismissed for challenging the *basilikos*. The new man elected to the post (Psellos now said) must be watched, and swift action taken if necessary. Psellos had already used imperial authority to solve the problem, since, as the *strategos* knew, he enjoyed the emperor's favour, but to no avail. The *strategos*, who had promised Psellos frequent visits but had not come, would be pardoned if he made the *basilikos* his protégé.

Date etc.: c.1058–62: Psellos is *proedros*, and looking back to the reign of Constantine IX. See also excursus 16.4. This is the only letter addressed to a *strategos*: it is surely no coincidence that it contains the letters' bluntest references to the use of imperial power and authority deriving from imperial favour. The identity of the emperor is unclear.

Moore 196: mss P, L, U, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 24–6 (Russian translation); Dölger 1925, 1995, no. 908; Ostrogorsky 1958, 99; Ostrogorsky and Grégoire 1958, 241–2; Ahrweiler 1960, 51 n. 4, 73 n. 6 (with textual proposal), 74 n. 1; Ahrweiler 1966, 167 n. 2; Lemerle 1967, 90–1; Weiss 1973, 96 n. 301, 134 n. 443 (reporting textual proposal of Bezobrazov); Ljubarskij 1978, 28; Ljubarskij 2004, 50; Grünbart 2005, 75, 172 n. 304, 292; Külzer 2008, 501 n. 18; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 33; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27.

[KD 1] To the metropolitan of Madytos]

Some time after Psellos wrote S 165, the *basilikos* of Madytos sent thanks to the metropolitan for his virtues and his support, which Psellos put down to his *philia* towards himself. He further claimed that the metropolitan's friendship was a major reason why he had not exchanged his rights to

the appointment of the *basilikos* for a more distinguished position, even though the metropolitan was unwilling to admit the role played by friendship. The metropolitan should continue helping the *basilikos*, admit the reason why—and write simple letters to Psellos.

Date etc.: nw c.1058–62: Psellos is *proedros* (see S 165, written around the same time).

Moore 19: ms K. Weiss 1973, 133 n. 440; Ljubarskij 1978, 28; Ljubarskij 2004, 50; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 8, 253, 360; Külzer 2008, 501 n. 17; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 35; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27.

[S 148] To the metropolitan of Madytos

Psellos wrote to the metropolitan of Madytos about a petition, with a note on the *basilikos* of Madytos. Psellos admitted that while the metropolitan had completely finished his part with regard to the petition, he had not completed his own role. He had not been lazy, but biding his time. The metropolitan would have heard rumours of the situation. Psellos had often mentioned him to Constantine X, who asked who he was and why he did not come to the capital with the other prelates. Now the metropolitan's presence was essential. If he came and did obeisance to the emperor, he would gain his request, and stop questions about his motives for absence; if not, he should tell Psellos, then petition the emperor with a gift of holy oil from his local saint, and the chrysobull would be confirmed. The metropolitan had mentioned the *basilikos* in his letter. In an obscure comment, Psellos said his own views went further than those of the metropolitan, but only because he had great faith in the metropolitan himself, that he would not willingly be unjust to anybody, but gain no more, no less than his due.

Date etc.: nw c.1062–4. It is not clear how the story of the *basilikos* has developed, but his case has now gone beyond the exchange of basic information seen in the other three letters. The emperor, from indications of his character and the likely passage of time, is probably Constantine X.

Moore 422: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 176; Karpozilos 1984, 21 n. 5, 29 n. 122; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Grünbart 2005, 356; Grünbart 2011, xx n. 34.

KD 65 TO THE *KRITES* OF BOUKELLARION

Psellos told the *krites* of Boukellarion about an inhabitant of the theme, who had just approached him, claiming to have received a positive judgement from Psellos as *krites* of the theme, but a negative decision on the same case from his successor, Morocharzanes. Copies of both verdicts, the man said, survived. Psellos had first tried to smooth over the anomaly, saying that he no longer cared about such squabbles, but the man had insisted, and so he had given him

this letter. He had forgotten the case and his own decision in it, but if he had investigated it and posted a written judgement, he would be surprised if Morocharzanes, a man who knew his limitations, had contradicted him. If he had, the verdicts cancelled each other out. The current *krites* should investigate and come to a just decision on facts, not previous judges and judgements.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). This letter looks back to a time when Psellos was himself *krites* of Boukellarion, and gives judicial advice. Both the date when he held the office, and the temporal distance from which he recalled it, are uncertain.

Moore 268: mss L, A. Weiss 1973, 22 n. 62; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Karpozilos 1990, 23 n. 73, 205; Cheynet 1999, 234; Ljubarskij 2004, 166; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 281 n. 1271, 291 n. 1304; Grünbart 2005, 261, 289; Riedinger 2010, 16 (French translation).

KD 66 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

Psellos told the *krites* of Thrakesion of an old case newly reopened. The letter-carrier's trial had been unduly influenced by powerful opponents, and the recent extension would not have occurred had not the emperor decided that justice demanded re-examination of the case. The *krites* should fulfil the emperor's wish and act out of *philia* towards Psellos, giving the man all possible aid. He must be conscious that one now so poor in appearance had once been very rich, but had fallen in with evil men who changed his wealth to poverty. The *krites* should become his champion against ill-fortune, giving his due to Psellos and his own judicial rectitude.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The provision of useful judicial advice suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 372: ms L. Weiss 1973, 59 n. 184; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Kazhdan 1994, 212; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88, 187 nn. 101 and 104; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143, 143 n. 152; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267, 281 n. 1273; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1.

KD 67 TO ARISTENOS

Psellos wrote to Aristenos, claiming that his attitude towards him had been consistent. He always had in mind Aristenos' request to be recalled from exile, without needing the reminder of the letter just received. But access to the emperor was completely dependent on others, and even then the course of discussions was decided by the emperor himself. If it depended on Psellos, Aristenos (and many others, including his nephew) would have been recalled long ago. Psellos would approach the emperor direct on their issue, yet without ignoring the mediation of useful courtiers, until success was won.

Date etc.: nw c.1066. Probably an intractable case resulting from the Mangana conspiracy of 1060. Psellos' influence over Constantine X seems to be at a low ebb.

Moore 214: mss L, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 61; Ljubarskij 2004, 100–1; Bernard 2017, 32.

KD 68 TO ROMANOS SKLEROS

Psellos greeted both his masters, old and new: first he wished all manner of prosperity to Romanos Skleros. He was a man of many virtues in soul, body, character, and opinion, splendid and noble, full of goodness in spiritual and physical dimensions, hunting various wild beasts on his productive estates. May all his undertakings be successful. Above all Romanos was to hug and smother with kisses Psellos' other master, Romanos' new-born grandson. May God grant that the boy follow family role-models of previous generations, whom Psellos had never seen but could imagine through his close knowledge of Romanos himself. Psellos had praised him before and would do so again, free now from the slur of flattery. As for the boy, he should grow easily through teething and other childhood ills to become a splendid adult like the tallest of trees.

Date etc.: c.1057. The fact that Psellos can no longer be accused of flattering Romanos probably dates the letter just after the latter's dismissal by Theodora in 1056.

Moore 164: ms L. Seibt 1976, 80; Volk 1990, 56 n. 16; Limousin 1999, 350 n. 22, 351–2 nn. 27 and 29; Grünbart 2005, 62 n. 27; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6; Papaioannou 2013, 160 n. 90.

KD 69 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos told the *krites* that the metropolitan of Larissa was a serious and revered friend of his. The metropolitan needed the aid of the *krites*, an even older and closer friend of Psellos, to recover his see of Larissa. Psellos made the request so that the metropolitan would see how well Psellos chose his friends.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16).

Moore 325: ms L. Duyé 1972, 169 n. 15; Weiss 1973, 63 n. 199; Ljubarskij 1978, 107; Mullett 1988, 18 n. 84; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 123; Ljubarskij 2004, 163.

KD 70 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos replied to a letter from the *krites* (a *magistros*) asking what he should do with the money he had demanded from a man from his theme [name suppressed]. Psellos advised him not to hand it over for another man [name also suppressed] to spend, but should give it in such a way as to have the

ruined peasant houses rebuilt. Psellos did nothing to disturb his relations with the *krites*, both because of the *philia* he felt towards him and because he naturally favoured the unfortunate. Even if he were not so inclined, he would have been made to feel like this by the *krites*' wife, on whom he congratulated him, though he had heard from her but never seen her. Psellos hoped the *krites* would soon be home to see her (and Psellos himself) after too long an absence.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.5). The advice on legal practice suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 445: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 107–8; Karpozilos 1990, 209; Volk 1990, 342 n. 2; Ljubarskij 1978, 108; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 122–3 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 163, 165; Grünbart 2005, 295; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71.

KD 71 TO THE PATRIARCH [PROBABLY MICHAEL KEROULARIOS]

Psellos now knew that Michael Keroularios could, when necessary, discard strict legalism for a higher and sacred human feeling. He reported that an *ex-hegoumenos*, still Keroularios' man, had paid him an emotional visit, condemning himself and proclaiming the patriarch as completely innocent. [This person may have been Leon Paraspondylos.] Keroularios showed flexibility which was an ideal characteristic for a patriarch. Psellos also thanked him for granting an unspecified request, and asked him to continue to show his sympathetic side.

Date etc.: More likely to be dated c.1053–4 than 1057 (see excursus 12), reflecting one of the more positive stages in the tortuous relationship between Psellos and Keroularios. If the visitor is Leon, the title he is given may reflect the minor role he played during the reign of Constantine IX.

Moore 267: ms L. Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Ljubarskij 2004, 144; Grünbart 2005, 210.

KD 72 TO PARASPONDYLOS THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Psellos wrote a letter to Leon Paraspondylos. The first section stresses the links that bound them and their equality of status, mentioning the similar forms of address to be used to each because of their standing as monks. The second section reports that Psellos had delivered to the patriarch Keroularios a letter entrusted to him by Leon, after praising the latter at length. Keroularios had received the letter well, and written a reply.

Date etc.: 1055–6 (after 1054, since Psellos is tonsured); this is more likely than 1057 (see excursus 12). There is no way of telling what the content of the letter was.

Moore 430: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 91, 93; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 337–8; Ljubarskij 2004, 142, 144; Grünbart 2005, 307, 339, 353; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5; DIETHER REINSCH.

KD 73 TO THE *KRITES* OF MACEDONIA

Psellos told the *krites* of Macedonia that a *notarios* who was a *basilikos* was persecuted despite his office, slandered and arrested as if he was a private citizen. He kept the office of *basilikos* because he expected aid from the *krites*. (The *basilikos*' enemies insulted the *krites* and his help for the *basilikos*—Psellos would not give details now—but the *basilikos* always spoke well of the *krites*, having first learned of his virtues from Psellos, then met them in person). His purpose now was to demand, with the aid of the *krites*, the exact amount of the *oikodomion* tax due to him, no more and no less. Psellos was ignorant of any offence committed, but the man gave up the function of *basilikos* as if removing an intolerable burden from his shoulders. Psellos had transferred it to another man, who, he thought, would also be overwhelmed by evil enemies, unless the *krites* acted with the scrupulous impartiality which his reputation suggested.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.2). Support for a *notarios* and details on impending litigation suggest a date after 1060. Cf. the parallel situation of the *basilikos* of Madytos (see KD 64 and the three following letters). Papaioannou 2012a indicates that the text appears twice in ms. L.

Moore 237: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 73 n. 2, 73 n. 4, 74 n. 1; Harvey 1989, 106 n. 108; Oikonomides 1996, 82 n. 138; Papaioannou 2012a, 312 n. 75; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 32, 119 n. 41, 124 n. 85; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71.

KD 74 (= S 32) TO THE *KRITES* OF
KATOTIKA

Psellos recommended to the *krites* of Katotika a very close friend who had many simple virtues of character, manners, and reliable simplicity, a good man of noble decency and birth. Admittedly he was in exile, having been convicted of a tax offence, but he was a credit to all tax officials in the respectfulness of his manner and the justice of his demands. If the *krites* could meet him kindly, embrace him in a friendly way, make him an intimate and treat him with his generous temperament, the connection would be good and happy for both of them.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.3). Support for a potential subordinate, especially a tax specialist, suggest a date after 1060. The letters S 64, S 111, KD 74 and KD 253 appear consecutively in ms. L. Papaioannou 2012a sees them as referring to the same man. Small but significant differences between the man's descriptions in the four letters make me hesitate to agree. The same article indicates that the text appears twice in ms. L.

Moore 383: mss P, L. Duyé 1972, 171 n. 24; Weiss 1973, 55 n. 174; Ljubarskij 1978, 107 n. 87; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 132 n. 55; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 63; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1300; Ljubarskij 2004, 163–4 n. 110; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 221, 257, 292; Kaldellis 2011, 663 n. 40; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59, 312 n. 75.

 THE BISHOP OF PARNASOS (3 LETTERS)

The first letter was probably (but not necessarily) written first, an example of Psellos' happy relations with the bishop. The other two were written at the same time, the second describing the sending of the third. The date was during the reign of Ioannes kaisar's brother, Constantine X (1059–67), probably towards its beginning, when relations between Psellos and Ioannes were very good.

KD 75 To the bishop of Parnasos

He thanked the reverend bishop of Parnasos for remembering his friends and for nurturing them with generous gifts in large quantities (cheese, fish, butter, or all at once, as he had just received). Even without letters, the bishop's virtues and good will towards Psellos would be sufficient reason to admire him. They should continue the exchange without interruption, praise from Psellos and food from the bishop, the commodities of which each had a plentiful supply, to the benefit of both.

Date etc.: nw c.1061–2 (see also excursus 15.1). The three letters are dated by the role of Ioannes *kaisar*, confirmed by recommendation of a client and the idea of exchange.

Moore 220: ms L. Karpozilos 1984, 26 n. 72; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 70.

[S 62] To the bishop of Parnasos

The bishop had asked Psellos for a letter of recommendation to Ioannes *kaisar*. He was a good friend who seldom wrote, but (more importantly) he and Psellos regularly thought of each other. Psellos had already sent the desired letter to Ioannes *kaisar*, with a copy, and gave thanks for the butter etc. sent to him.

Date etc.: nw c.1061–2. See KD 75.

Moore 221: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001; Grünbart 2005, 284, 347.

[S 63] To the *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas

Psellos told Ioannes that the bishop of Parnasos was his friend, and he believed he was also a client of Ioannes, as the latter often spoke to Constantine X on his behalf. The twin advantages should benefit him, letting him make requests at the highest level. Either advantage should in itself be enough for this: both together should make him a close confidant of Ioannes. As Ioannes knew, the bishop spoke little but thought deeply. He was grateful to his masters, and gave loud thanks for small favours. The investment of a little kindness, not large sums of money, would bring rich profits from him.

Date etc.: nw c.1061–2 (excursus 6). See KD 75.

Moore 500: mss P, L.

KD 76 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos told Maleses, *krites* of Katotika, that a Peloponnesian too needed his impartial aid in legal matters, being both sued and suing. He also wanted a more generous tax assessment and begged for personal recognition, for example by a dinner invitation, which he would very much welcome. The *krites* should not gloat at the enhanced social status implied by the last point, but must beware parables which make demands on the rich. If he complied, he would earn the man's gratitude, and that of Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 3 and 16.5). This may be Psellos' adoptive son-in-law; that and the advisory tone of the text suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 53: ms L. Duyé 1972, 167; Weiss 1973, 50 n. 154; Ljubarskij 1978, 107; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 124, 130 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 163, 164.

KD 77 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRACE

Psellos asked the *krites* of Thrace not to blame him, as he was innocent, knowing nothing of the points the *krites* put to him from information given by others. The monks of the Theotokos were wrong for attacking the impartial *krites* and not their accusers. Psellos put all the blame on the latter. He declared the *krites'* actions just and welcome to the Theotokos, as he had shown her great respect and not alienated any of the possessions of her monastery.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69 (excursus 16). Psellos is looking after his own monastery, the Acheir-opoiotos, (see p. 53), but this was not an early acquisition, so it is little help in dating.

Moore 242: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Weiss 1973, 146 n. 496; Saradi 1995, 192 n. 131; Walker 2004, 66 n. 40; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017a, 53.

KD 78 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRACE

Psellos told the *krites* of Thrace that a *protokentarchos* (the letter-carrier) had bought his office long ago. Because he had gained Psellos' friendship or because of the high payment made to the *sekretos* or both [lacuna] he should not lose from the investment. He should not suffer financially after heavy expense and hard work, or gain nothing from friendship. The *krites* should make the man one of his circle and give him appropriate help, to justify the expectations with which he had made the purchase and placed his hopes in Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The timescale of the *protokentarchos'* investment suggests a late letter. It may be a request for employment, which implies a date after 1060.

Moore 310: ms L. Lemerle 1967, 90–1; Oikonomides 1996, 280 n. 68; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1303; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71.

KD 79 UNADDRESSED

If Psellos had as much power now to help as he had *philia*, he told a petitioner he supported, his correspondent would long ago have escaped all his troubles. When he received the letter requesting his help, Psellos began to work on the emperor [probably Constantine X], whom he saw to be already rather favourable. He acted energetically both directly and via the patriarch. His friend should not blame him for lack of success; he would probably have managed to help, but malicious yet plausible accusations intervened, made by clever men against his correspondent to turn the emperor against him. He hoped this situation would soon improve as times changed again. His friend should have patience, should realize that worldly suffering benefited the soul, and not despair, in the expectation of freedom from his troubles.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 6). The emperor concerned at first seems pliable, like Constantine X, later he becomes firmer, but Psellos still expects him to bend.

Moore 69: ms L. Sarres 2005, 93 n. 219; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66.

KD 80 TO THE *KOURATOR* OF CYPRUS

Psellos greeted a *kourator* of Cyprus, after often praising him in the strongest terms to the emperor Constantine X, who thus knew who he was and understood his qualities. He admired him for making peace in Cyprus after a time of troubles and governing it well. The *kourator* also had a warm champion in Ioannes *kaisar*. He should be confident: with God's will all this would slowly work in favour of his career, if he continued to be successful. He could be assured of Psellos' eloquent support and advocacy.

Date etc.: 1060–6 (excursuses 14 and 16.4). The scenario resembles others connected with Constantine X, and the presence of the *kaisar* makes the date certain.

Moore 511: ms L. Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Georgiou 2012.

KD 81 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos asked a small favour of the *krites*, on behalf of the *vestarches* who owned the monastery of Melias. He requested that his monastery should not suffer over the *monoproson* tax that he owed, as he promised faithfully to pay it in the capital. Psellos had told him to send the *krites* (his correspondent) a signed confirmation of his promise, to avoid misunderstandings. He asked the *krites* to aid the monastery and its petty properties, because the *vestarches* was completely without a protector. Favours (like the present one) were being sought to help him, and this would continue; he hoped they would be successful.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The information over a potentially judicial issue suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 137: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 289 n. 1297; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160; Jeffreys 2017a, 56.

KD 82 TO THE *KRITES* OF ANATOLIKON

Psellos told the *krites* that the metropolitan of Amorion was not raising problems over the *monoprosopon* tax he owed, but wanted to make things easier for himself by paying in the capital rather than in Anatolikon. Though simpler for him, this would make no difference to the tax authorities. Distance was much less important for them than quality, and he promised ideal *monoprosopon* animals, plump with some remaining milk teeth, as stipulated by the chief of the imperial stables. If the *krites* approved, there would be no reduction of the tax due in quantity or quality, help would be given to the metropolitan and a favour done for Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.3). This sympathetic discussion of the tax process suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 326: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 5–6 n. 7; Weiss 1973, 54–5 n. 171 (partial German translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Harvey 1989, 107 n. 109; Oikonomides 1996, 104 n. 104; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 230.

KD 83 TO THE *KRITES* OF BOUKELLARION

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Boukellarion that the *dioiketes* (chief tax official) of Ankyra was a rich and just suppliant of Psellos' who had been aided by the *krites* over the gathering of tax before, and now needed more help. If the previous help had been given for reasons of justice, without knowledge of the man's connection with Psellos, let it happen again for reasons of friendship. If the first help had been for Psellos' sake, let this second be for the same just reason, not only for Psellos but to gain a reward in heaven.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.3). This very sympathetic approach to tax belongs after 1060.

Moore 272: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 109, 119; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88, 192 n. 132; Kazhdan 1994, 210; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267, 289 n. 1297, 290 n. 1301; Ljubarskij 2004, 166, 180; Gkoutzioukostas 2007, 78 n. 49.

KD 84 TO THE *KRITES* OF BOUKELLARION

Gregorios the *magistros*, a landowner in Boukellarion, asked the *krites*, through Psellos, to follow the imperial orders he had received and map and

mark out definitively the boundaries between the lands of Gregorios and those of the *sekreton*. He should work with particular sensitivity at points where there was disagreement, serving the interests of justice, not of the *sekreton*. He should preferably begin at once, if he had time. If there was a delay, Psellos asked the *krites* to tell another person [name suppressed], in dispute with Gregorios, not to take anything or encroach on lands now controlled by him but to await the official demarcation. Anything already seized should be returned. This would serve two purposes, justice and *philia*. Psellos wanted to help Gregorios (who could not help himself), but could only work through friends like the *krites*.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.2 and 16.4). Psellos is unusually open in using his network to promote imperial agendas, whilst remembering that *philia* demanded a sensitive approach.

Moore 290: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 141 n. 4; Weiss 1973, 51 n. 155; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Magdalino 1994, 93; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 289 n. 1297; Ljubarskij 2004, 166.

KD 85 TO THE *EPI TON KRISEON*

If Psellos had the power to do what he wished, the *epi ton kriseon* would not still be in exile. Psellos had consistently regarded him as a great friend and supported him in every way before the emperor [probably Constantine X]. The latter was well-disposed and had promised to recall him; he was not hostile to him, nor given to rancour or anger. He was simply waiting for the right time. The *epi ton kriseon* had nothing to fear: Psellos would continue his work. His correspondent should not despair, but accept his punishment as a sign of divine chastisement, which would soon turn to the healing of his wounded heart.

Date etc.: 1060–6 (excursuses 6 and 14). The scenario resembles others involving Constantine X.

Moore 121: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 63; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 206 n. 928; Ljubarskij 2004, 103; Sarres 2005, 93 n. 219, 387 n. 100; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66; Jeffreys 2017, 72 n. 36.

KD 86 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos expressed surprise at the affection shown by a *notarios* from Katotika for the *krites* of his theme. He came briefly to the capital, saw Psellos and immediately left, such was his need to enjoy the eloquence and personality of his *krites* (not just his generosity). Psellos gave an encomium of the charm exerted by the *krites'* attractive character, a musical instrument inspired by Orpheus and all the Muses. The *notarios* had been won by his mellifluous

tongue: he should vary and modulate its musicality, so as to increase the mutual affection between the two of them. The *krites* should also write more often to his supportive friend Psellos, and help the letter-carrier with advice and generosity. Psellos believed the *krites* had already in the past made the man's acquaintance.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Concern for the *notarios* probably dates the letter after 1060.

Moore 525: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 4; Duyé 1972, 168 n. 8, 169 n. 15; Ljubarskij 1978, 107, 108 n. 89, 110; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 135 n. 62; Limousin 1999, 359 n. 55; Ljubarskij 2004, 163, 164 n. 112, 167.

KD 87 TO PARASPONDYLOS THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Paraspondylos had sent Psellos a delightful but very short letter (to somebody as tall as Psellos), as everything about Leon, he said, was delightful. He was so greedy for the letter that he had swallowed it whole, together with its source—a rock and a flow of milk and honey; such was his desire for contact with Leon. Leon must lengthen his letters to satisfy him, and should not be so annoying, concealing his feelings by grimaces of different kinds, frustrating one who passionately desired both to hear him and to read his letters. He asked for a shorter fish and a longer letter; if he loved Psellos' letters he should help the letter-carrier.

Date etc.: c.1053–6 (excursus 12). Eulogies of this kind are hard to date during the main period of Psellos' contact with Leon.

Moore 224: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 91 n. 68; Karpozilos 1984, 20 n. 3; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 339, 343 n. 72; Ljubarskij 2004, 142 n. 85; Grünbart 2005, 296; Bernard 2011a, 1 n. 1; Chernoglazov 2011, 59; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5; DIETHER REINSCH.

KD 88 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

The patriarch's holy fragrance, Psellos said, was preferable to any myrrh for him, and he used his memories of the patriarch when he ran out of local supply, feeling he owned the perfumes of Arabia. Thus he regarded Antioch as the most blessed of cities because of the patriarch's presence. Now the perfumes had dried up and the patriarch was the city's only resource. Psellos recalled that before he had received an abundance of perfume and letters from Antioch: he could bear the lack of perfume, but why should the letters (which were more valuable) stop too? The patriarch should not worry about ambitious style and vocabulary. With the passing of time, Psellos too was less concerned with such things. The patriarch should write simply, as he spoke, like a churchman, leaving musical refinement to others. But above all, he should write!

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (?) (excursus 7). A patriarch known to Psellos with high status in Antioch may be Aimilianos. The encouragement given to overcome deficiencies argues against the identification.

Moore 138: ms L. Drexel 1941, 309; Ljubarskij 1978, 39, 97; Karpozilos 1984, 20 n. 4; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 47; Ljubarskij 2004, 49, 69, 149–50; Grünbart 2005, 280, 284, 336; Bernard 2011a, 1 n. 2.

KD 89 TO THE *KRITES* OF BOLERON

Psellos told the *krites* of Boleron that Theoktistos had promised him a monastery in return for many favours. In fact, he offloaded on to him a monastery which did not deserve the title, for it was small, desolate, and completely lacking in resources. He got no crops from it, and the monks there were seriously starving. Despite its problems he had not given up on it, and still hoped to work on improving it, maybe buying neighbouring lands. He asked the *krites* not to spend time there—there was no point in living in such a wilderness. It was called Dobrosontos, a suitably barbarian name. He also asked the *krites* to inquire informally if the wretched place's problems were soluble. If yes, he would try to solve them, if not, he would give up. He hoped also for the *krites'* help, with a visit and careful treatment, because it was his property as well as Psellos', through their *philia*.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). Psellos is looking after his monastery. For Dobrosont(s) see p. 54. Theoktistos cannot be identified.

Moore 264: ms L. Tapkova-Zaimova 1954 (Bulgarian translation); Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Weiss 1973, 49, 148 n. 510; Harvey 1989, 159 n. 195; Cheynet 1999, 237 n. 14; Chondridou 2002, 359 n. 226; Jeffreys 2017a, 54.

KD 90 TO THE *KRITES* OF DROUGOUBITEIA

Psellos wished good health to the *krites* of Drougoubiteia, the *vestarches*, his close friend and brother. May he gain profit from the law and think of Psellos, who was always thinking of him. The letter-carrier, a relative of Psellos, had delayed a little in the capital to receive his pay, and then left to serve the *krites*. Psellos asked the latter to give him all possible assistance and remind him of the advice he was given. Psellos had told his relative to subordinate himself to the *krites* and work hard to win his favour by humility and helpfulness. As for the *krites*, he should, as a basic principle, give priority to maintaining a good name rather than making a lot of money.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.5). Recommendation for a potential subordinate and career advice are often marks of a date after 1060.

Moore 512: ms L. Limousin 1999, 361 n. 68, 362 n. 85; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 203, 199 n. 11, 201 n. 22, 217, 225, 243, 327; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 111.

KD 91 TO THE *KRITES* OF
DROUGOUBITEIA

Psellos recommended to the *krites* a man (the letter-carrier) who set out from the capital with confidence in the *philia* of Psellos and the *krites* as teacher and pupil. The man was potentially an excellent subordinate with limited ambition, intelligent, modest, sometimes philosophical, satisfied with little. Above all, he had been educated by Psellos, not in a literary way, but in the formation of his character, which was what was needed in the present case. The *krites*, his potential employer, was not a great communicator, by letter or in person. Yet he should write, and whatever tone he chose, from Attic to a simple language, would be used by Psellos in his reply. He should only ensure that each letter showed an honest picture of his character and opinions. He need not fear an overbearing response to a simple letter, as Psellos' winds could blow gently as well as strongly.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Recommendations for subordinates should be dated after 1060.

Moore 360: ms L. Limousin 1999, 362 n. 85; Ljubarskij 2004, 166; Grünbart 2005, 295, 353; Bernard 2017, 33, 39, 40–1 (English translation).

KD 92 TO THE *KRITES* OF
BOUKELLARION

The attitude of the *krites* of Boukellarion towards an unfortunate man [name suppressed] was his own affair. But Psellos stressed his one unshakeable principle of behaviour, to pity his fellow man. If his support for the man harmed the *krites'* plans or compromised his reputation, then he would be right to criticize. But if Psellos' advice to the man had not involved his correspondent's name at all, why on earth was he complaining? In any case, what benefit had the man gained from Psellos? First he was kept under house arrest, now he had fallen under deeper suspicion by trying to escape. The *krites* ordered Psellos not to help an accused man. But Psellos would advise the *krites* to offer help to anyone who fell into the abyss, however bad his character or crimes. The *krites* might compare his letter with Psellos': if he did this before good judges, and they attacked Psellos' version, he should stick to his own. But he should not be ashamed to adopt Psellos' proposal and become his friend, a decision nobody, so far as he knew, ever regretted.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Detailed discussion of judicial matters may suggest a later date, but it is offered here as defence against an accusation.

Moore 431: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Karpozilos 1990, 209; Ljubarskij 2004, 166; Grünbart 2005, 178 n. 347, 347; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 112.

KD 93 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos told the *krites* about the monk Elias. The letter is an extended humorous comparison between Elias and his namesake, the Elijah of the Old Testament. Terms of the comparison include the ability to fly (Elias was earthbound), skill with chariots (Elias practiced in the hippodrome), confrontation with Jezebel (no problem for Elias, who also did not need elements of Elijah's story which confirmed his celibacy). He was like the Trojan seducer Paris (in hair, not beard) and fed very well, unlike the ascetic Elijah. Elias had no problems going up and down to heaven: in short, he was much more down-to-earth than Elijah.

Date etc.: nw. c.1065–8 (excursus 4). The journeys of Elias are dated to the 1060s.

Moore 156: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 78, 107; Dennis 2003, 53–4 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–21, 124, 164.

KD 94 TO ARISTENOS

Psellos told Aristenos not to be annoyed, nor to avoid reading the letter: he was making no requests, but thanking him for a favour he had given a man over tax relief, at Psellos' request. The man seemed to have received at least ten times more than Psellos had asked, and reacted with as much gratitude as if forgiven all his sins, not just tax. Aristenos' soul was rich and fertile ground for sowing the word, giving crops not just in summer but all year round. Psellos hoped his full observance of the obligations of *philia* would continue.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7. Identification among the various Aristenoi is uncertain.

Moore 244: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 61; Ljubarskij 2004, 100; Papaioannou 2013, 254.

KD 95 TO KYR GEORGIOS THE *AKTOUARIOS*

Business was annoying in general (said Psellos), unless it was Georgios' business. Just as Psellos hated primary matter because of its formlessness, but also loved it because it was good at taking on form, so too he was repelled by his own affairs unless they let him speak to Georgios. Most started as matter and became objects, but paradoxically his possessions and estates started as objects with form but were in danger of losing it and dissolving into bare matter. Everything about them repelled him, the right season, the wrong season etc., including his estates' splendid names, like those invented for exotic compound animals, and especially now, for the current season. It was in vain that Homer praised the olive and the apple, not knowing of such a season.

Psellos' plants did not produce their regular fruits, but provided by-products like horses and cheek-pieces, maybe one day even Homeric elephants [ivory?] and dye with its dyer. His letter to Georgios was a consolation; if it meant having something to discuss with him, he was willing to have more such business, so he might have reason to smile as well as lament. To upgrade them, he asked Georgios to do what he could himself, and to help his all-purpose servant [his 'usual monk'].

Date etc.: c.1052–4. This may be part of the drive to upgrade and protect his estates which preceded retirement to Olympos (cf. e.g. KD 140, S 29). Beneath its amusing but baffling, anarchic surface (Lauttermann suggests), he may be complaining of two problems: a bad season for his crops combined with a form of military taxation ('horses and cheek-pieces').

Moore 370: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 29 n. 94; Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Karpozilos 1990, 244; Volk 1990, 343 n. 2, 345 n. 8, 347 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Papaioannou 2013, 158 n. 86; Jeffreys 2017a, 50; MARC LAUTTERMANN.

KD 96 TO BASILEIOS, *KRITES* OF ARMENIAKON

Psellos replied to Basileios, *krites* of Armeniakon, who was in despair over his theme, giving him reasons to be more positive. First, he had a God-given opportunity to act as a good physician and restore to its previous health a theme now in a bad state. But equally, his negative view of the theme might result from his inexperience in observing such cases. He was viewing problems in the extremities, when the vital organs were sound; he was looking at mountain villages, ignoring the more prosperous cities (lists provided). All reviews of this kind depend on the context within which the reviewer places them. In the same way, the sea cannot be ploughed and is barren unless you look for fish. Basileios had despaired too soon. His pain would be assuaged by concentration on central issues.

Date etc.: nw c.1160–2 (excursuses 3 and 16.5). Basileios Maleses was probably the young *krites* widely recommended in 1059–60, and may have been Psellos' adoptive son-in-law. Kazhdan thinks that the list of cities indicates losses to the theme. This seems wrong.

Moore 507: ms L. Duyé 1972, 173 n. 38; Gautier 1975, 329; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Kazhdan 1993, 108–9; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 124 n. 40, 125, 126–7 (partial French translation); Cheynet 1999, 238; Ljubarskij 2004, 165 n. 112, 167; Sarres 2005, 96 n. 224, 97, 120–1 n. 49.

KD 97 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos sailed from Trigeia (he told the *krites* of Opsikion) along the coast, with rowers (from Syke) and passengers enthralled by the monk Elias, described ironically as a great ascetic, whose presence kept the sea calm. He provided his audience with a critical catalogue of the capital's brothels and

taverns, of their prostitutes and their different abilities, skills, and preferences, of the ways in which the institutions were run. The sea remained calm, though Psellos expected a storm to arise like that which threatened Jonah. Elias claimed he had no direct experience of the prostitutes he listed, that his recourse to them was merely verbal. If this was true, Psellos said, he was only half evil; if not, the whale should not swallow him, for it would never be able to spit him out again.

Date etc.: nw c.1065–8 (excursus 4). The journeys of Elias are dated to the 1060s.

Moore 234: ms L. Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 236; Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 76–8, 101, 104; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 214; Volk 1990, 304 n. 3; Dennis 2003, 55 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2003a, 357; Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 122–4, 155, 159; Jenkins 2006, 144–5; Bernard 2017, 31 n. 77.

KD 98 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos told the *krites* that, although portions were given to God and to Mammon, opposites with no third term, the monk Elias had invented a distinct element combining the two, dedicating his monk's robe to God and to Mammon the power of his soul and his bodily organs. When singing psalms he was fornicating mentally, and after behaving shamelessly all day he wept and piously repented. He also bridged other dualities like monastery and brothel (with preference for the latter), heaven and hell, switching between the extremes. After death he might be condemned to be scorched on one side and cool on the other, as his days now belonged to God and nights to Satan.

Date etc.: nw c.1065–8 (excursus 4). The journeys of Elias are dated to the 1060s.

Moore 157: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 76, 78, 101, 104; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 241–2 (partial English translation); Dennis 2003, 56 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 122, 124, 155, 159; Grünbart 2005, 199 n. 11; Jenkins 2006, 144–5; Bernard 2017, 31 n. 77.

KD 99 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos and the people of Atzikome (he told the *krites*) had made an agreement: they would work as his villagers, and he would lobby the *krites* of Opsikion for them, as in this letter. They knew nothing of the *praitor*. Psellos had done all he could, and for the rest he influenced the *krites* in their favour. Any legal issues would be referred to him. Their judicial protection against injustice and the provision of swift help was part of the *krites*' job, but *philia* had more influence: justice and *philia* must reinforce each other.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursuses 16.2 and 16.5). This shows Psellos giving information on a potentially judicial issue; but it may also indicate him supporting a possession of his own.

Moore 278: ms L. Weiss 1973, 138 n. 467; Ljubarskij 1978, 28, 101, 103, 104; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 89; Kazhdan 1994, 210; Limousin 1999, 359 n. 55, 361 n. 67; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 155, 157, 159; Grünbart 2005, 218; Bernard 2017, 31 nn. 77–8, 32.

KD 100 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

An impoverished judicial official (the letter-carrier) had been waiting around the court of the hippodrome for years to get a good job, without success. He was a simple, good, and humble man, and precise in his judgements, an excellent potential subordinate. Now he had left the capital for Opsikion, in awe of the *krites* of the theme, ignorant of his cheerful disposition. Psellos wrote to the latter, asking him to welcome the visitor with his usual friendliness, which was enough to make men like this devoted to him—treating him as Alexander treated his men, acting as comrade, not master. The *krites*' problem was that he had Psellos, not Aristotle, as his teacher.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.5). Such recommendations for subordinates belong to the period after 1060. This is a good example of a letter one would expect to come from the *nomophylax*.

Moore 382: mss L, B. Weiss 1973, 39 n. 118; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104, 110; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 101; Limousin 1999, 362 n. 86; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 135 n. 578; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159, 168; Bernard 2017, 28 n. 57, 31 nn. 77–9, 32.

KD 101 TO THE *KAISAR* IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos gave Ioannes *kaisar* three answers to questions he had posed: prosa-goge (in Hippokrates) is gradual treatment by opposites, e.g. of heat by cold, so as not to cause the problems which might arise by immediately cooling down an overwarm body (or vice versa); the diaphragm is a rounded muscle dividing respiratory and alimentary systems in the body, below the former and above the latter, helping in breathing and excretion; patriarchal matter is so called because of its unmediated connection with the creator Father.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6). But Ioannes' request tends towards the impersonal category of which Psellos would later complain. See G 11 and KD 102.

Moore 410: ms L. Volk 1990, 298–300; Ieraci Bio 1996; Jenkins 2006, 141 n. 22; Bernard 2017, 23.

KD 102 TO THE *KAISAR* IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos told Ioannes *kaisar* that Trajan's army when attacked by packs of forest animals was saved by two magicians, Julian the Chaldaean and Apuleius the Libyan, two very different men. The former was more material, the latter more intellectual and spiritual. Apuleius had partial success, Julian killed them all.

To defend his crops against caterpillars, Psellos told Ioannes to use methods like Julian's as refined by Proklos, using one noxious animal against others. When the star Hydros rose, he should kill a viper, slit it lengthways, and tie it to string so as to make a circle around the plants. This would form an invisible barrier effective against corn-rust and locusts, and preventing the birth of caterpillars.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6). It is tempting to link the caterpillars with the field-mice of G 11, and put KD 102 in the category of annoying impersonal letters attacked in G 11. This would hint at a similar date. How might Ioannes have reacted to this advice?

Moore 179: mss L, B. Volk 1990, 215 n. 60, 300–2.

KD 103 TO BASILEIOS THE *EPI TOU KANIKLEIOU*

Basileios' recent letter had neither established nor renewed their bond of friendship, because it had remained unbroken. But it helped in its preservation and continuation, and their mutual understanding. It gave Psellos a fuller idea than before of Basileios' character and motivations. By seeing his intelligence combined with deep humility, Psellos realized his friend's great strength of character. With the high value he placed on his old *philia* with Psellos, Basileios held him in his heart, as distance could not separate souls so resolutely linked. If he wanted to join them more firmly, he should write letters, for the constant expression of feeling in letters helped to renew it. Basileios' warm welcome for the inspector (*ἐπισκέπτων*) was proof of his honest *philia*. The recent letter was brought by the inspector's overseer, who had confirmed its truth. If Basileios needed Psellos' weak aid, he must write and command it.

Date etc.: nw 1064–70. Basileios is otherwise attested twice in 1068, in a military context. The Greek word for 'inspector' is unexpected.

Moore 335: ms L. Duyé 1972, 169 n. 14, 175 nn. 50–1, 177 n. 59; Weiss 1973, 20 n. 54, 115 n. 381; Ljubarskij 1978, 60–1 n. 30, 107, 108 n. 89; Ljubarskij 2004, 99–100 n. 39, 163, 165 n. 112, 170 n. 280.

KD 104 TO BASILEIOS, METROPOLITAN OF NIKOMEDEIA

Psellos told Basileios, metropolitan of Nikomedia, that he knew nothing of his plan or how it affected the oikonomeion under Hagia Sophia. The patriarch was so troubled by the metropolitan's objection that he was now less willing to accept Psellos' requests on his behalf, and was reluctant to agree, as usual. That was his reaction to lost causes. He wanted somebody else to make the decision, or else himself. This was why he gave the metropolitan unprecedented freedom to celebrate the liturgy. As the matter was no foregone conclusion, Basileios was told to come to the capital by the due date or soon after and

explain things from the beginning, and maybe win his point: he could also give the patriarch due honour and make a long-delayed visit to Psellos. Perhaps (Psellos suggested) the patriarch, wanting Basileios to come, had contrived to force (not request) his attendance then, as he could not be the only metropolitan absent on the occasion.

Date etc.: undated. The description of the patriarch does not seem to fit any of the three possibilities, Keroularios, Leichoudes, or Xiphilinos.

Moore 351: ms L. Kaldellis 2011, 653 n. 6.

KD 105 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos was only partly satisfied by the answer he received from Mauropous. He did not believe that such an other-worldly intellect was busy farming as he claimed, keen to count the bales and discuss the value of the harvest and despising philosophy, haggling with farmhands, not talking to his closest friend. Was Psellos not right? Mauropous had cultivated the harvest of ideas, not crops: that was why he despised worldly things. He also claimed a new sensitivity to natural delights, but Psellos, who saw through him, knew he had felt this since his youth. Yet his soul was only just immersed in his body, like corks on water. Mauropous was exceptional in admiring nature, even praising beauty and harmony of discourse. But literary beauty was not something distinct: there was only one overall idea of beauty appearing in different beautiful things, not a separate idea for each category. The further away from the overall form, the more it was suffused with its opposite. Thus the eye only saw the surface of deceitful material beauty, not its real ugliness. But the intellect saw everything, so intellectuals like Mauropous could love immaterial beauty. Psellos rejoiced that his friend enjoyed his letters, as he was very perceptive of reality. But perhaps joy in the musicality of Psellos' prose was due to a fault in Mauropous' intellectual makeup. He already lived in heaven or beyond: why did he need earthly things? Why care for agriculture when communing with God on divine issues? Criticisms Psellos made before were now reasons for praise. He listed classes of people, from those obsessed with earthly senses through intermediate cases up to those who contemplated heavenly reality, like Mauropous. It was surprising he still thought it worthwhile to talk to Psellos.

Date etc.: c.1076, after Mauropous' resignation from Euchaita. Mauropous is shown as an other-worldly intellect closeted with God, unlikely to be interested in farming and beautiful letters. This might fit better with the end of his life, when he resigned from Euchaita and espoused the monastic life, than with earlier periods. But cf. KD 221.

Moore 41: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6, 48, 150; Karpozilos 1982, 28 n. 36, 113 n. 13, 114 n. 23; Karpozilos 1990, 199–200; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Kazhdan 1993, 93, 96–7; Chondridou 2002, 185 n. 136; Ljubarskij 2004, 73 n. 105, 111. 7, 83, 222–3; Grünbart 2005, 92 n. 131, 352; Papaioannou 2013, 76 n. 78; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 111.

KD 106 (= S 60) TO THE *KRITES* OF OPTIMATON

Psellos' letter would be serious but short, because he did not wish to labour a painful issue. He was depriving the *krites* of a domicile, a serious matter in the theme of Optimaton, which was barely big enough for one *taxeotes* [senior tax official]. But this was only Psellos' opinion. Another man, who was making a petition to him on the matter, claimed not to be removing a domicile, and asked the *krites* not to change anything. If this was right, the matter was trivial. But if Psellos happened to be right, the *krites* should cancel the applicant's whole burden, or half, or any other fraction he wished.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Discussion of judicial issues is usually dated after 1060. *Κάθισμα* ('domicile?') usually refers to a monk's cell, but its reference here is obscure. Is the context that of taxable property, or of a *krites*' rights to stay at a monastery, of which Psellos complains (e.g. S 29).

Moore 49: mss P, L, V, v⁴. Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7, 71 nn. 2 and 4–5; Weiss 1973, 53 n. 162; Oikonomides 1996, 94 n. 50, 95 n. 54, 96 n. 63, 113 n. 164, 280 n. 71; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1303; Grünbart 2005, 357; Kaldellis 2011, 653 n. 7; MICHAEL ANGOLD.

KD 107 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

A poor man (the letter-carrier), yet very rich for the *krites* as Psellos' relative, was wronged by a neighbour, who stole his mulberry trees and the grove where they grew. The victim appealed to the emperor, and acquired a letter to the *krites* for help. The man also appealed to Psellos, and received the present friendly request. The *krites* should give him a kind hearing for Psellos' sake, show sympathy for the wrongs he suffered, stop the guilty man (maybe with a fine), return the property unjustly taken and write a report to stop him reoffending. These recommendations would perhaps all be in the imperial letter—but Psellos' suggested motivation would be not authority but *philia*.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.2 and 16.4). Detailed discussion of judicial issues, and comparison of *philia* with imperial authority, suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 381: ms L. Weiss 1973, 60 n. 187; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 105, 110; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 103; Chondridou 2002, 123 n. 100, 142 n. 151; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160, 168.

KD 108 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos insisted that his lavra of Megala Kellia was tax-exempt, to stop further trouble from tax-officials. It was outside the jurisdiction of the *krites* and free from any need to show him hospitality, as all Olympos would witness. None of his predecessors as *charistikarios* had been bothered over hospitality for the

krites. Yet the *krites*' men had licence to make any accusation they liked, and a year before only Psellos' letter stopped them imposing tax. The *krites* should remember the exemption and his affection for Psellos, which the latter had never forgotten. He should tell his men to keep away, so that Psellos should not keep away from him.

Date etc.: nw c.1056 (excursus 16.3). For Megala Kellia see pp. 54–5.

Moore 20: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 148 n. 507; Ljubarskij 1978, 28, 101, 105; Oikonomides 1996, 91 n. 24, 280 n. 72, 281 n. 75; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1303; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 155, 160; Papaioannou 2013, 10; Jeffreys 2017a, 49–50; ZACHARY CHITWOOD.

A NOTARIOS VISITED THE KRITES
OF PAPHLAGONIA (2 LETTERS)

These two letters form a pair written at a distance of some months. The first was sent with a poor notarios travelling to Paphlagonia for the winter to seek help from the krites, an ex-student of Psellos. The second was sent the next year, to thank the krites for his help and hope that it would continue in spring. Psellos was pleased to see that his lessons had borne fruit.

KD 109 To the *krites* of Paphlagonia

A *notarios* going to Paphlagonia expected as much of its *krites* as Psellos expected of God, travelling far in winter (against Psellos' advice) for a kind reception and assistance, as he was poor. His certainty that the *krites* would receive him well and provide help overcame all other considerations. Now, after crossing icy mountains, he was there (and had delivered the letter): he should be given some aid and not be disappointed, despite the emperor's strict economies and resulting problems for *kritai* and their subordinates. May the journey not have been in vain, but may he find something worth all the effort.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). The date depends on detailed reference to a *notarios*.

Moore 299: ms L. Weiss 1973, 120 n. 404; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Oikonomides 1996, 88 n. 6; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 207, 355, 359; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Bernard 2017, 36.

KD 110 To the *krites* of Paphlagonia

A second letter on the same subject was not asking for favours, but giving thanks. Psellos' teaching had borne fruit in the *krites* as tasted by the *notarios*, and its effects were extended to those who came in contact with him, like sweet river water in the sea. Psellos, and the *notarios*, were most

grateful, and the latter's gratitude would be magnified by his noble nature, which tended to increase as it was tested. Winter was over, and the *krites'* spring fruit should especially delight the *protonotarios*, irrigated as it was by Psellos' teaching and his student's own innate goodness.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). The date depends on detailed reference to a *notarios*.

Moore 8: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1299; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 355, 356; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Bernard 2017, 36.

KD 111 TO ARISTENOS THE *PROTOASEKRETIS*

He sent Aristenos a pair of his *grammatikoi*, very different men, one in monastic robes, the other in white. One loved the kingdom of heaven, the other the earth. One was more intellectual, with awareness of the supernatural, the other enjoyed the senses, finding heavenly thrones inaccessible, but happy to get a visible throne on earth. He was ready to sit on it at once, his head ready for the crown, parading like a peacock. He expected to receive both throne and crown from Aristenos, who should grant them, the throne on a high dais, while for the crown only simple green stuff was needed. The rite might involve perfume and incense, the savour of sacrifice, bracelets, necklaces, plump cushions, and some purple. He went to Aristenos to achieve all this, and fate had the night before made him expect success. A striking-looking black man embraced him as if to kiss him, but then nibbled his nose and grazed on his beard. He realized at once that things were about to happen. He put on his sandals and came as an ally (?), as Aristenos saw, full of enthusiasm. But Mithraic initiates were not let down into the sanctuary at once: they were usually punished on every step of the long descent, tattooed and worse as they went down. This splendid *grammatikos* should undergo Mithraic preliminaries before seeing Mithras and becoming his priest. Aristenos, as an expert, would conduct him well. Any initiate should suffer a little at the entrance to his sanctuary. The ancients spent money for this, but the *grammatikos* should make some money, so as to be initiated often, and not refuse suffering, in the hope of profit.

Date etc.: nw c.1066–7 (excursus 16.1). Aristenos is already *protoasekretis*, but not yet involved in war. Such elaborate recommendations for potential subordinates, with judicial advice, confirm a date after 1060.

Moore 18: ms L. Gautier 1976a, 97 n. 44; Ljubarskij 1978, 61; Ljubarskij 2004, 100; Grünbart 2005, 225; Papaioannou 2013, 226 n. 104.

KD 112 TO AN ARCHIMANDRITE ON OLYMPOS

Psellos wrote to an archimandrite on Olympos about a need to visit him. Psellos once subscribed to the view that mental communication was preferable to bodily contact; however he no longer supported it. He had often made mental visits to the archimandrite, having imaginary conversations with him, picturing him by memory and exchanging opinions. But this brought no relief, because he needed to enjoy him with all his senses. Paradoxically he even needed to take over his qualities—his energy and his freedom from sin, and to stand before God condemned at the side of one who was not condemned. He must see him again while still alive, one of them paying a visit to the other.

Date etc.: 1055–6. Psellos probably met the archimandrite on Olympos, so the letter should be dated in 1055 or soon after. This may be the same stern critic he faced earlier when preparing for tonsure in S 185.

Moore 174: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

KD 113 TO THE *HEGOUMENOS* OF
THE MONASTERY OF SMILAKAI

Two monks begged pitifully to return to Smilakai monastery, claiming wrongful exclusion. Psellos supported them—on condition that their sin could be pardoned and the rage of the *hegoumenos* of Smilakai calmed. Moreover he advised the *hegoumenos*, in disciplining them, to shorten their period of punishment. Otherwise, their sickness would increase and they would do more harm because deprived of his wise guidance.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Issues of monastic exclusion are best dated after 1060.

Moore 67: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

KD 114 TO PENTAKTENOS

Psellos praised Pentaktenos' retreat to a monastery and devotion to the good. He should cling on to the beloved calm which prepared men for God, and pray that Psellos might be freed from the world's confusion to join him.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 175: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150.

KD 115 TO PENTAKTENOS

Psellos replied to a letter of Pentaktenos on the workings of providence, adding a point of his own. God did not grant all our requests: though the time of God's gifts was set, the manner of their giving depended on men. Initiative was required in all areas of life. Pentaktenos should not leave things to providence, but act himself. Pentaktenos' fortunes (Psellos remembered) had varied dramatically, with regular changes from good to bad and vice versa. But one day he would achieve better fortune, and relations with patriarch and emperor would improve.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 363: ms L. Sarres 2005, 94 n. 220, 265 n. 22.

KD 116 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos said that his eloquent pupil the *krites* of Opsikion had written him a poor, brief letter, as if his mind were on higher things, conversing with Zeus, with no leisure for discussion with Psellos, unlike the situation in the past, when he preferred Psellos to Zeus. Maybe he was enjoying Opsikion's baths and other delights. The *krites* should enjoy the old games, whose rudiments he had been taught by Psellos, or new delights. But if he thought of Psellos at all, he should care for his estates, not just to take nothing from them but to treat them as if they were Psellos himself.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69 (excursus 16). This may be dated at any time during the operation of the network. Psellos is protecting his monasteries, and thinking of the *krites*' student days.

Moore 261: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104; Kazhdan 1994, 209; Limousin 1999, 362 n. 88; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159; Grünbart 2005, 108 n. 253, 258; Bernard 2017, 28 n. 57, 31 n. 77, 32 n. 81, 38.

KD 117 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Opsikion, a very learned man. He had not yet asked the *krites* for a great favour (of which he would write soon, unless the *krites* wrote of it first). However as a foretaste he sent him a letter carried by a man from Nicaea, who had inherited a modest fortune including a little estate called Doche, on which he could barely live. The man did not fear destructive storms or plagues, just the *krites*' men known as bravos, whom only their master might call off. Psellos' letter provided the details: could the *krites* please give a sign that he would respect it and keep the animals away?

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69 (excursus 16.2 and 16.3). The dislike for tax-collectors suggests an open date within the time of the operation of the network.

Moore 359: ms L. Weiss 1973, 52 n. 161; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104; Saradi 1995, 183 n. 75; Oikonomides 1996, 281 n. 75; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 67, 362 n. 87; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159; Grünbart 2005, 218; Mottana 2005, 233 n. 11; Bernard 2017, 28 n. 57, 31 n. 77, 32 n. 80.

KD 118 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos reminded the *krites* of Opsikion of a request made for a *protonotarios* in his theme, who had been slandered to the emperor, as Psellos himself had witnessed. The *krites* should ignore the words of the perpetrators and examine their actions. He should not (in Psellos' view) punish too quickly or in a wholesale way, for it was impossible to stamp out the problem. He should act with tact and flexibility, sometimes with heavy sanctions but with more generosity in less serious cases. Thus he would avoid criticism and help the wronged.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Such concern for a subordinate, together with professional advice to the *krites*, suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 21: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104, 110; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1299; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159, 167; Grünbart 2005, 357; Bernard 2017, 31 n. 77, 32.

KD 119 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos sent to the *krites* a man who was not a neighbour or other associate but a dependent, carrying a letter. The man was of respectable birth and a good soldier, but an unfortunate disaster occurred and he suffered badly. He therefore decided to settle down as a farmer, keeping cattle rather than wielding the spear. Even this private home life proved difficult for him. The *krites* should, for Psellos' sake, aid this rich man who had become poor, winning Psellos' gratitude and divine recompense.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The introduction to a legal case supports a date after 1060.

Moore 141: ms L. Weiss 1973, 139 n. 468; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159, 180; Grünbart 2005, 230; Bernard 2017, 31 n. 77, 32.

KD 120 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

A man from Nicaea claimed he had many creditors unwilling to pay their debts, and needed the *krites* of Opsikion to help him recover what he had lent. Psellos wrote to ask the *krites* to intervene with justice, both for its own sake and because of Psellos' request. The *krites* used once to enjoy the way Psellos

made everyday issues an excuse for philosophy, but he now despised it: Psellos had thus stated the problem bluntly.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The legal information, which might suggest a late date, is rather sketchy.

Moore 297: ms L. Weiss 1973, 61 n. 189; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 109, 110; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1304; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160, 166, 168, 264; Bernard 2017, 31 n. 77, 32.

KD 121 TO THE *MEGAS OIKONOMOS*

A *logographos* (secretary?) said his new title of *kouboukleisios* had only been presented to him in shadowy outline, and needed definition and colour: it should be gilded by a tax-exemption and made a permanent designation. If not, the *megas oikonomos* would suffer another demanding letter. To avoid this second disaster, he must respond to the first. The exemption must not be delayed, as the man would leave with Psellos the next day.

Date etc.: undated. Outside the normal range of the network.

Moore 521: ms L.

KD 122 TO THE *MEGAS OIKONOMOS*

Psellos did not know Leon Melandros [‘Blackman’], the letter-carrier, but he came with a note from one of Psellos’ closest friends, seeking a recommendation to the *megas oikonomos* to join his staff, which he made in the present letter. If Leon was of good character, mild manners and with something of the *oikonomos*’ virtue, the request would be appropriate; if not, however cold he was, he would be changed dramatically in quality by contact with the *megas oikonomos*. He would melt in his new patron’s warmth and be purified in body and character to become leukandros [‘whiteman’].

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Concern for a potential subordinate suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 489: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 180; Grünbart 2005, 232, 265, 320, 360.

KD 123 TO THE *KRITES* OF AEGEAN SEA

Psellos told the *krites* that had to use both valour and cunning to help in his business, turning to the other method, if the first failed to achieve their common goal. He had already tried both, with limited success, not what the *krites* wished but what the times allowed. But the imperial castle was not

shaken by straightforward attacks. They would have to use artillery and siege warfare, and break through the perimeter wherever it was possible, so as to get inside. His experience suggested that, while plain speaking was a good thing, direct approaches were less successful than indirect means. Skilfully directed words went to the heart of the matter, but without skill they might miss their mark. So the *krites* should not despair at this first setback, but go on to the second attempt. Perhaps—but it was bad luck to make predictions.

Date etc.: nw 1060–6 (excursus 14). The scenario resembles others connected with Constantine X. The addressee may be Nikolaos Skleros with his formal title (excursus 2).

Moore 442: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 132–3 n. 5; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 161–3; Sarres 2005, 387 n. 100.

KD 124 TO NIKOLAOS SKLEROS

The best way to well-considered virtue and a good life (Psellos told Nikolaos Skleros) was devotion to the Theotokos, not only her icons but her dim and miraculous images like those of the Acheiropietos monastery which Nikolaos used to reverence. They were painted miraculously without human intervention where she stood on guard just outside the capital: hence the monastery's name. Devotion to the Theotokos did not just mean veneration of her icons, but a visible increase in virtue and also the care of her church, the beautification of the building and its estates, in which she (via Psellos) now invited him to help. Nikolaos had once followed Psellos' advice and example, though they had recently lost contact. He now advised him to use his office also to demonstrate his religious commitment and love of his friends. If he did nothing else he should look after the estates of the Acheiropietos as if they were his own (not just because it was owned by Psellos), and write letters to Psellos.

Date etc.: nw c.1055–60: for the Acheiropietos, see p. 53. It was probably not one of the earliest monasteries Psellos owned; there is also no sign that Skleros is *krites* of Aegean Sea, as in the 1060s, or ill and near retirement. Was Skleros asked to help as the local *krites*, or was this another kind of investment?

Moore 97: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 109 n. 3, 132–3 n. 5; Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Weiss 1973, 139 n. 492; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 25, 106; Cutler and Browning 1992, 26–7 (English translation of a substantial part of the letter); Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 27, 162; Grünbart 2005, 357; Jeffreys 2017a, 53.

KD 125 TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN

Psellos sent a description of his monastery of Medikion, saying (with a pun) that it was a good place for thinking, not far from the sea. But its geographical position did not make it one of the earthly delights. It lay amid a crown of hills,

with views which would be splendid but were blocked all around, especially on the sides of the sea and land: Psellos compared it to descending into a large ship's hold. The worst factor for anyone living there was that the sea was almost close enough to touch, but as invisible as if you were living far from it—an illustration of the myth of Tantalus, as all enjoyment of the surroundings was frustrated by the barrier of hills.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69 (excursus 16), cf. KD 124. For Medikion see pp. 53–4, 55. This was one of Psellos' earliest monasteries, but this is not a selfish plea to a *krites* over tax, and so is irrelevant for dating.

Moore 491: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 79 n. 1; Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 240 n. 37; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 107; Ljubarskij 2004, 163; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

NIKOLAOS SKLEROS AND THE MONASTERY
OF TA NARSOU (2 LETTERS)

It is not easy to decide the order in which these two letters were written. The first claims it is a repeated request, suggesting that it followed the second: but the content seems more general than that of the second, and it asks for a meeting with the hegoumenos, for which the second letter would be a good preparation. Maybe there had been an earlier, unsuccessful approach, perhaps represented by S 65.

KD 126 To Nikolaos Skleros

Psellos told Nikolaos that the *hegoumenos* of the monastery of Ta Narsou liked repeating requests because it ensured that the recipient heard them, thus increasing their chances of success. So he made Psellos, as a matter of importance, renew his appeal to Nikolaos Skleros, *krites* of Aegean Sea, two or three times. Nikolaos should receive the *hegoumenos* favourably, as he had promised, and give him a personal interview. He should aid the monastery's estates then and in the future, which would not cause him difficulties. In this he would apparently just be aiding Psellos [the *charistikarios*] but he would really be helping the Theotokos and martyrs revered at Ta Narsou, who would potentially become Nikolaos' fervent supporters when he needed them.

Date etc.: nw c.1063–4 (excursus 2). For Ta Narsou see p. 55.

Moore 432: mss L, F. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323, 149 n. 512; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Lemerle 1977, 213; Ljubarskij 1978, 31 n. 34; Chondridou 2002, 160 n. 34; Ljubarskij 2004, 54 n. 37; Walker 2004, 67 n. 40; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

KD 127 To Nikolaos Skleros

Psellos wrote a letter for the *hegoumenos* of Ta Narsou, a monk from the monastery but its best and greatest asset, to be taken to Nikolaos Skleros to ask for help. Some monks had gone out to care for its local estates, which were many but poor, even unprofitable. Psellos' letter was aimed at reducing this loss. He asked the *krites* to take the monks and the estates under his wing, helping in as comprehensive a way as possible, to match the danger of the attacks being made on them. He should aid in every way, or in most things, or at least in one major issue. Nikolaos might wonder how Psellos could bear to write such a letter after losing the incomparable and learned Lizix, Skleros' nephew. How could he speak at all? But what could he do? Petitioners did not let him grieve properly.

Date etc.: nw c.1063–4 (excursus 2). For Ta Narsou see p. 55.

Moore 452: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 109 n. 3, 132–3 n. 5; Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323, 149 nn. 512 and 515; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Lemerle 1977, 213; Gautier 1978, 87 n. 20; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 25, 31 n. 34, 107; Chondridou 2002, 160 n. 34; Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 27, 54 n. 37, 163; Walker 2004, 67 n. 40; Pitarakis 2009, 174 n. 28; Bernard 2014, 189 n. 99; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

KD 128 TO NIKOLAOS SKLEROS

Psellos complained that the candidate *notarios* he had sent to Nikolaos, instead of being joyfully accepted, was rebuffed at the first interview and, as he left, given a rejection letter for Psellos. Psellos had expected Nikolaos to grant him any request, however difficult. He agreed that times were hard and danger threatened, but then why appoint a *notarios* at all? There were less expensive alternatives. Why had Nikolaos preferred another candidate to his? He spoke of Nikolaos' debt to himself and the high quality of his own man. He wondered if Nikolaos, in choosing an inferior candidate, was rejecting their *philia*. Psellos affirmed his own continuing commitment to it, and claimed never to have had any doubts about Nikolaos. He had sent his candidate back again to get the embarrassing affair sorted out, complaining that he had been forced to squabble over the issue when in mourning. He would not insist on the *notarios*, but Nikolaos must mention Psellos' name to the man and give him some benefit, as a mark of their friendship.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 2, 16.1). Psellos' mourning is surely for Anastasios Lizix.

Moore 459: ms L. Weiss 1973, 119 n. 400; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 161, 167; JONAS NILSSON.

KD 129 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF CHALCEDON

‘Why not icons?’, Psellos asked the metropolitan. He himself had sacrilegiously wrapped up and stolen many from sanctuaries and escaped at the time. When later suspected he swore he had not [is there some form of irony here?]. He told the metropolitan he liked these dim pictures, which clearly illustrated the painter’s art. He had a collection of panels, not many with gold or silver, but like new senators without insignia. It was not painful to give them up.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 331: ms L. Lemerle 1977, 290; Oikonomides 1991, 36 n. 10 (English translation); Cutler and Browning 1992, 28–9 (English translation); Fisher 1994, 47 n. 17; Angelidi 1998, 79 n. 12; Chondridou 2002, 74 n. 94; Grünbart 2005, 62 n. 27, 250; Kaldellis 2007, 209 n. 65.

KD 130 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

The imperial *klerikos* was trying a second time to become bishop of Paionia, with the *krites* of Thrakesion’s sealed approval in advance. If he was in time, he might perhaps succeed in his quest, but if not, the long journey, in person or by proxy, was in vain. Psellos was often being asked for favours, either because he loved everybody or people loved him, he did not know—but it was not for his power. The *krites* of Thrakesion, if he was a friend, should give practical proof of the fact or of his own confidence in Psellos’ affections. Psellos had heard many rumours claiming that a different candidate [name suppressed] was best for the see.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). The claim that such letters were very frequent suggests a later date when the network was in effective operation. The purpose of the letter is unclear.

Moore 154: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 132; Ljubarskij 2004, 160, 168.

KD 131 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

Psellos said that the *krites* had probably given less benefit to a *notarios* than the thanks the man gave him for his treatment, judging by the intensity of his praise. This could be remedied either by the *krites* increasing the help or the *notarios* reducing the praise. There were logical and practical difficulties in the second proposal. It would be better for the *krites* to excel himself and give preferential treatment to the Byzantine, not the Syrian. What role could be played in the equation by Psellos’ request? It must give the *notarios* higher status, since it was a mark of wisdom to treat subordinates well. Things would only be made worse by having the *notarios* make a long and difficult journey

and then not achieve what he deserved. Would his presence make any difference to the *krites*' opinion of him? The deficit already mentioned of help as against thanks still needed attention.

Date etc.: nw after 1060 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.1). Reference to a *notarios* and a virtuous circle involving help and thanks are enough to support a firm date after 1060.

Moore 423: ms L. Weiss 1973, 122 n. 413 (partial German translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 160.

KD 132 TO [BASILEIOS] MALESES

Maleses was happy to receive formal requests from Psellos, never before having dreamt of doing so. Psellos told him that, if he smiled on receiving the current request, he understood what *philia* meant; he hoped he had not grimaced. Psellos too enjoyed making requests of a *krites* who was so learned, supportive of Psellos himself and eloquent. The request had to do with a poor soldier who had appealed to the emperor when Basileios Splenarios *vestarches* had been *krites* of Armeniakon, and now did so again. His freedom of action was severely curtailed by a complex problem over a past obligation to serve, which had not been solved. He seems unable to bear the weight of the *strateia*, and it appears [see Haldon 1993] that he wished to serve rather than pay it. Respect for past arrangements, for the law, for a poor soldier and for Psellos' *philia* meant that Maleses should free him and let him go freely on campaign. Psellos finally apologized for a previous letter, which should not be interpreted as implying doubts about Maleses. He would say more on this if necessary.

Date etc.: nw 1160–2 (excursuses 3 and 16.2). Maleses was probably Basileios Maleses, maybe Psellos' adoptive son-in-law. The detailed description of the soldier's legal status confirms a date after 1060. The soldier's demand seems to be the commutation of a burdensome *strateia* by service in the army; might the payment itself result in some way from financial commutation of earlier service?

Moore 465: ms L. Ahrweiler 1966, 146 n. 1; Duyé 1972, 167; Kazhdan and Ljubarskij 1973, 219–20; Weiss 1973, 50 n. 154, 53 n. 163 (partial German translation); Gautier 1975, 329; Lemerle 1977, 270 n. 50; Ljubarskij 1978, 108; Mullett 1988, 18 n. 86; Harvey 1989, 111 n. 137; Haldon 1993, 55 n. 132, 60 n. 146; Kazhdan 1994, 211; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 124–5, 129–30 (partial French translation); Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 164; Grünbart 2005, 289; Bernard 2015, 189 n. 82; MICHAEL ANGOLD; ANTHONY KALDELLIS.

KD 133 TO THE *DOUX* OF DYRRACHION

Psellos wrote to list the *doux* of Dyrrachion's virtues, knowing that when asked a favour for a local citizen [name suppressed], he had done and would do (for Psellos) everything owed a friend. The extent of his past help was known only to the *doux* and the recipient. Psellos also heard from the latter, who made the

doux and Psellos his co-saviours. As saviours, all but divine, they should now deserve the name in its full sense, freeing the man completely from the Hades of tax problems. Psellos would have joined the *doux* in this task himself if in Dyrrachion, but as his arms did not reach that far, he made the request with a Stentorian epistle. The *doux* must save the man from his current slough of despond, and set his feet on the rock and the way leading to salvation.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). This vague judicial information is not enough to confirm a date after 1060.

Moore 218: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 60 n. 7; Karpozilos 1990, 209; Grünbart 2005, 170 n. 278, 320.

KD 134 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos lamented the lack of communication from the patriarch. Until recently, he had sent Psellos many letters requesting information and advice, and supplying the needs of epistolary friendship. Now, as the situation improved, he had forgotten him and no longer asked questions. Psellos decided to take the initiative. He boldly used the techniques of a Hellenic philosopher called Socrates [sic], who was always asking questions, and made many generalized queries about the patriarch and Antioch, using the metaphor of the ship of state sailing in a terrible storm with the patriarch at the helm. The questions turned into equally general advice. Psellos knew little of the situation or its potential for the future, and was not close to the capital's expert on Antioch [name suppressed]. This was the material for which the patriarch had not asked. He would get better answers if he asked the questions himself.

Date etc.: undated (excursus 7). Note the identification of Socrates. This was probably a predecessor of Aimilianos.

Moore 374: ms L. Drexl 1941, 309; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Volk 1990, 268 n. 4; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Papaioannou 2013, 176 n. 33.

KD 135 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos had received a letter about his efforts in the capital on behalf of the patriarch. If it was sent to cheer him on, like a charioteer in the hippodrome, he would try even harder to help and resist the patriarch's opponents. But if the patriarch implied he was neglecting his obligations of *philia*, he denied it, claiming the other was badly informed. Surely news must have reached Antioch of Psellos' strong, public, and continuing support of all the patriarch's issues before the emperors? He was not boasting, but showing he was keeping their agreement. But he needed letters from Antioch. The patriarch's excuse was that he could not write at the elevated level used by Psellos. This was no problem:

Psellos would use Christian vocabulary to churchmen, and the patriarch, since he was superior in everything but language, would be under no handicap. If needed, Psellos would write like a nomad in a completely barbarian way. His diction was like that of birds that mimic their bird neighbours when calling to them. So the patriarch should write confidently. Psellos' letters might be priceless, but could all be bought for the cost of one holy sermon.

Date etc.: nw c.1060–2 (?) (excursus 7). Aimilianos would surely not need such encouragement; this was probably a predecessor. The plural 'emperors' may indicate more than one at the same time. If so, the letter was written in 1060 or later. But there are other interpretations.

Moore 115: ms L. Drexler 1941, 309; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 223; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 73; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 167 n. 255, 254, 337, 356; Kaldellis 2007, 207 n. 57; FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 136 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF AMASEIA

Psellos praised a fine letter he had received from the metropolitan, in a plain style which he regarded as ideal for correspondence with friends. He asked him to continue writing in the framework of *philia*, with no need to heighten the level of his language. His sole criticism was that the metropolitan tried to demonstrate *philia* towards another person [name suppressed], which was self-evident, though it went against his natural inclinations. In writing, the metropolitan had no need to demonstrate his virtues, which could be immediately appreciated by all the senses, as had happened to Psellos. He gave an encomium of the well-known virtues of the metropolitan, apologizing for its brevity: he regarded him as of almost godlike eminence. This was the view of an *ex-krites* of Armeniakon [probably Psellos himself], who had enjoyed his character for a long time. He urged him to write regularly. Envy was abroad, but could easily be dispelled by opposition from Psellos and others, like the dispersal of mist concealing the sun. The malevolence of detractors (like 'Kronos', whom Psellos had opposed) would be defeated and could be ignored. Greetings were sent from another friend [name suppressed].

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No indication of dating, apart from the operation of the network.

Moore 130: ms L. Weiss 1973, 23 n. 65; Gautier 1975, 326; Ljubarskij 1978, 204; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 112; Ljubarskij 2003a, 355 n. 35; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 281 n. 1271; Ljubarskij 2004, 294; Grünbart 2005, 254; Papaioannou 2006a, 96 n. 3; Papaioannou 2012a, 312.

KD 137 TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN [SEA]

Psellos apologized for asking multitudinous favours of the *krites* of Aegean Sea, because of the number of petitioners approaching him, his refusal to reject

them, and the *krites' philia* towards him. If the *krites* did not want to receive the requests, there were various ways of stopping them reaching Psellos or being passed on from him to the *krites*, though all would cause embarrassment, and some could turn friendship into loathing. The letter-carrier was a man from the theme who wanted the *krites* as his nominal protector, though too poor to need help over any of the different kinds of tax (a list given). There was only one possible reason for contact: if the *krites* ever wanted to make requisitions (*προστάξεις*) in the theme, the man was a *grammatikos* who claimed experience in such matters and would be useful, even if he was likely to be subject to requisition himself.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). The large number of petitioners suggests a date after 1060. The ms title 'To the metropolitan of Amaseia' is wrong: the text addresses the *krites* of Aegean Sea.

Moore 490: ms L. Ahrweiler 1960, 5–6 n. 7; Weiss 1973, 120 n. 405; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Ljubarskij 1978, 106, 110; Oikonomides 1996, 104 n. 104; Koder 1998, 51 n. 18; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 nn. 1297 and 1298; Ljubarskij 2004, 161, 168.

KD 138 TO AIMILIANOS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Aimilianos might think that by sending Psellos one letter he had covered all the time since they parted. Psellos, measuring the debts of friendship involved, demanded thousands of letters. He made urgent demands for the repayment of these dues with all speed; this was not hard, as Aimilianos was a good source for exactly the superior spiritual streams Psellos lacked. He would collect this debt. Just as he was insatiable for the patriarch's conversation when he was in the capital, he made equal demands for friendly messages now he was in Antioch. Though he had a picture of him in his heart and memory, Psellos also wanted to see and hear him in person and by letter. It was no surprise that Aimilianos had cowed the monks of the Thaumaturgos monastery into respectful submission: it would have been surprising if they had held out for long against his fulminations. They were inevitably impressed by his great virtues, the wild beasts were tamed, their young spared and their noxious food and water improved, everything necessary for spiritual refreshment. The monks visiting the capital came to see Psellos, and urgently begged him to gain him, at last, as a champion. He promised them this, following Aimilianos' instructions. He should not spare his tongue over subjects on which the patriarch had asked him to speak, paying his respectful debt for Aimilianos' holy and paternal affection. He made indirectly a last bold request, not for himself, but for friends and family: could Aimilianos please send him some Antiochene fabrics?

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursus 7). The patriarch who knew Psellos well and cowed the monks of the Thaumaturgos monastery was probably Aimilianos.

Moore 428: mss L, F. Drexel 1941, 309; Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Weiss 1973, 149 n. 516; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Angold 1995, 389 n. 22; Angold 1998, 233 n. 38; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 251; Papaioannou 2006a, 108 n. 38; Bernard 2011, 143 n. 26; Papaioannou 2013, 186 n. 72; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

KD 139 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos wrote to say that, in a brief interlude in his troubles, a monk had brought news of the spiritual welfare of the patriarch of Antioch. This enthused Psellos, as he had no such details from the patriarch himself, by letter or any other way. Psellos had need of information on the patriarch's practical and spiritual concerns. It would be a kind of delightful music to discover what charmed him and freed him from painful pressures: this would soothe Psellos' suffering too. If the patriarch despised such communication because of theological preoccupations, he told him to write as he wished, using simple vocabulary: Psellos would read and interpret his letters in his own way.

Date etc.: undated (excursus 7). Not Aimilianos.

Moore 260: ms L. Drexel 1941, 309; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 357; Sarres 2005, 71 n. 147; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

KD 140 TO [ZOMAS] THE KRITES OF OPSIKION

Psellos wrote to Zomas the *krites*, complaining of the state of Medikion, his monastery—and Zomas' too, in *philia*; the letter-carrier was one of the monks. It would perish, unless Zomas offered help. The monks often gave thanks for having Psellos as owner, since he entrusted them to a man like Zomas. He asked him to continue helping the monks by waiving rights to food, as before, on his annual visit. In the trial over water, Zomas judged the monks as long-term owners, but occupants without title, only mildly rebuking a neighbour, a minor, whose father was clearly in the wrong. Zomas was plainly nervous about the minor, but wrongly, as his inheritance was gained unjustly by non-appearance at trials, and he himself stole the monastery's rights the previous year. There was nothing to fear if the young man was completely condemned; Zomas should change his verdict to give the monks complete ownership. If he persisted in his judgement, his favour to Psellos would be incomplete because of a minor who was a complete villain.

Date etc.: nw 1052–4 (excursuses 8 and 11). Written after S 29, as Psellos made plans for tonsure. For Medikion, see pp. 53–4, 55.

Moore 265: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 261 n. 119; Weiss 1973, 52 n. 160, 62 n. 196; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1304; Ljubarskij 2004, 50, 155, 159; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

KD 141 To Kekaumenos [see KD 59 and the two following letters]

KD 142 (= S 24) TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos wrote to the *krites* about a *notarios* whom the latter had apparently punished severely [details obscured by a lacuna]. He accepted the need for exemplary punishment to discourage other wrongdoers, but not of the innocent. Punishment of the innocent damages the laws which are the whole basis of punishment, and also infringes the rules of *philia*. If the man remained in disfavour, Psellos would assume that justice demanded it, together with clemency on account of Psellos' petition. The *krites* should use the man as he wished or send him back to the capital. Psellos had not sent him a burden, but tried to help him in his problems.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). An important sign of the operation of the mature network. Psellos claims to be helping the *krites*, not the *notarios*.

Moore 117: mss P, L. Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7; Weiss 1973, 121 n. 408; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 105, 110; Kazhdan 1994, 210; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 90; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160, 167.

KD 143 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

In a letter to the *krites* Psellos spoke of yet another friend of his, an elderly man who had had little benefit in the capital from this friendship, after Psellos lost favour with the palace. He now needed care from Psellos' request and the *krites*' fulfilment of it. The *krites* was asked for small things he would give without a request: kindness, humane treatment, respect, and understanding. The man should be honoured for his grey hairs and good manners (and maybe for Psellos' support). He had struck many problems, and needed a time of repose—as did the *krites* himself.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). Two elements might suggest a date after 1060: concentration on a possible subordinate and loss of imperial favour. Neither is clear.

Moore 210: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 105; Kazhdan 1994, 210, 211; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267, 281 n. 1270; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160.

KD 144 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos wrote to the *krites* about a *notarios*, a relative of his whom he had often praised to him orally in the capital and was now supporting by letter, thus covering both kinds of recommendation, whichever was more effective. His support was not just dependent on the family connection. The man had a character like his own, though the *krites* should not be surprised that his station in life was not the same. He had been less lucky than Psellos, who had succeeded by determination despite limited family circumstances. Psellos

shared all his resources fairly with his family, above all the *krites*, who he hoped would take the lead in helping the man.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Careful recommendations of *notarioi* should be dated after 1060.

Moore 131: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 105, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160, 167.

KD 145 TO THE PATRIARCH

[The initial fragment of a letter, which indicates only that Psellos was asking the patriarch, maybe Keroularios, to do something.]

Date etc.: undatable.

Moore 380: ms L. Karpozilos 1982, 105 n. 178.

RECONCILING TWO BISHOPS (5 LETTERS)

These five letters were probably written very close together, during the first Anatolian campaign of Romanos IV. They were addressed to different senior members of Romanos' force, asking them to protect the bishop of Gordiason, who had been attacked by the neighbouring bishop of Matiane (both sees were in Cappadocia). We are told little of this squabble, but learn something of the recipients of the letters and Psellos' relationship to them. Much in the letters' tone supports Psellos' claims that this was a period in which he felt excluded and very lonely.

KD 146 To the *epi tou kanikleiou*

Psellos wrote to Basileios, the *epi tou kanikleiou*, who (he feared) might not remain the same eloquent, intelligent friend, living brilliantly as he now did near Romanos IV, probably despising the wretched beings out of favour, like Psellos. Basileios did not write or otherwise communicate, though Psellos spoke to him spiritually and remembered many previous contacts, especially talk and banter after dinner. His memories were very positive. Psellos had no access to Romanos either, though he was his most fervent supporter, and felt divine reassurance that his life would be spent following him. To win Psellos' undying affection, Basileios was to receive the bishop of Gordiason generously, and reconcile him with the bishop of Matiane. He was sure that Basileios would show the bishop that he was a good man and Psellos' friend, as Psellos would always be Basileios'.

Date etc.: nw 1068, during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV.

Moore 515: ms L. Duyé 1972, 175 nn. 50–1; Weiss 1973, 20 n. 54, 117 n. 393; Ljubarskij 1978, 59, 61, 108 n. 89; Ljubarskij 2004, 97–8, 100, 165 n. 112; Grünbart 2005, 257, 356; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66; Bernard 2015, 184 n. 46.

KD 147 To Choirosphaktes

[Eustratios] Choirosphaktes (Psellos foretold) would lamely excuse his complete failure to write by saying he preferred direct speech—an excuse for laziness, if not unfriendliness. But he was always in Psellos' thoughts. He should write simply to Psellos, who loved simple letters. Psellos' friend the bishop of Gordiason was under attack by the bishop of Matiane and in great difficulty; Eustratios should receive him in a kindly way and effect a reconciliation, to show the bishop of Gordiason what a friend Psellos the *hypertimos* enjoyed in Choirosphaktes.

Date etc.: nw 1068, during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV (cf. excursus 9).

Moore 330: ms L. Weiss 1973, 117 n. 393; Ljubarskij 1978, 59, 60 n. 30; Ljubarskij 2004, 97–8, 99 n. 39; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

KD 148 To Aristenos

Aristenos' demonstrative claims of *philia*, with gestures and kisses (Psellos said) brought him no letters at all. Psellos even asked many travellers from those parts for messages from him, giving all titles: *protoasekretis*, *vestarches*, a very learned man. Answers were always negative. It looked as if all his hopes in Aristenos were disappointed. Yet if Aristenos fulfilled one request, freeing his friend the bishop of Gordiason from any problems he faced, Psellos' frowns would disappear, especially if he wrote him a letter.

Date etc.: nw 1068, during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV; cf. excursus 5.

Moore 399: ms L. Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378, 117 n. 393; Ljubarskij 1978, 59, 61; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 132; Ljubarskij 2004, 97–8, 100; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

KD 149 To the *epi ton deeseon*

The *epi ton deeseon* (Psellos said) was going far away where it was not possible to capture him, but just to chase him with letters. He was pursuing him, not with a warrant for his arrest, but to make a request for a friend. Psellos' friend, the bishop of Gordiason, had invested many favours in their friendship, and now needed the dividends: a kindly reception and an offer of help from the *epi ton deeseon*. The letter ended with a complex verbal game over willingness and ability to help.

Date etc.: nw 1068, during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV.

Moore 433: ms L. Weiss 1973, 117 n. 393; Gautier 1976a, 91; Ljubarskij 1978, 59; Ljubarskij 2004, 97–8; Grünbart 2005, 170 n. 281; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

[S 131] [To a churchman, probably the bishop of Matiane]

After confirming his continuing high opinion of his correspondent, Psellos reminded him that he had introduced Psellos to the bishop of Gordiason, having him befriend the man and wish him to prosper. Nobody blamed his correspondent for current problems: the bishop wanted to gain his favour, while Psellos had not written to censure but to achieve a compromise and restore *philia*. The preferred option was that they reach this themselves. If not, Psellos as their nominated arbitrator would act justly towards both sides, so as to bring them into more secure *philia* than before. Psellos welcomed his gift, though he was no lover of food.

Date etc.: nw 1068. The forms of address used suggest a churchman, and the letter shows that he was the opponent of the bishop of Gordaision, named in S 146–7 as the bishop of Matiane.

Moore 219: ms P. Drexler 1940; Grünbart 2005, 184 n. 413, 322; Chernoglazov 2011, 59 n. 14.

A RELATIVE OF PSELLOS UNDER ATTACK
IN THRAKESION (2 LETTERS)

The relative was being slandered by imperial kouratores. According to Psellos, any sign of interest in the issue from the krites would be enough to deter them. Ljubarskij suggests that KD 152 and even KD 66 refer to the same case. His proposal is interesting but inconclusive.

KD 150 To the krites of Thrakesion

Psellos said that a kinsman of his had written a letter full of calamities, saying he was under attack from slanderous *kouratores*. His only possible salvation was the *krites* of Thrakesion, to be used as a port in a storm and to achieve some remedy. If the *krites* had any regard for Psellos, could he not intervene to assist? Psellos would act, should it be necessary, to save the *krites'* puppy from harm and deter the perpetrator; could the *krites* not save his relation from injury and slander? Just one sign of his interest and support for his kinsman would stop the evil men and bring them to heel.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The action in favour of a subordinate is neutralized by Psellos' personal interest in a relative. The text of KD makes the kinsman a *prothronos* (a senior bishop?), but Drexl notes that Kurtz has misread here an abbreviation for *ἀνθρῶπος*.

Moore 309: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 104; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 56; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1, 180.

KD 151 To the *krites* of Thrakesion

Psellos later repeated the request on behalf of his endangered relative [name suppressed], who was still being attacked and suffering severe harm. His enemies were now working in an underhand way to have him dismissed from office, but the *krites* should help him and save him in his time of need. He should fix a suitable penalty, so that the evil men would see the *krites'* favour for the man and be deterred from their activities.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). See KD 150.

Moore 385: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1.

KD 152 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

The letter-carrier was a protégé of Psellos, but was being wronged as if he had no patron. He had petitioned the emperor and courts, and gained an imperial letter, which would also be handed to the *krites*, demanding a kind reception and just treatment from the *krites* of Thrakesion (who was always just). The imperial letter commanded him to do justice, and the legal opinion might suggest the kind of verdict needed. Psellos also asked for the man to be treated kindly, so that he would understand that his judge was his patron's friend.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.4). The discussion of the relative value of *philia* and imperial authority suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 322: ms L. Weiss 1973, 59 n. 186; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Kazhdan 1994, 212; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267, 291 n. 1304; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 113.

KD 153 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

A reference: this *notarios* is a very clever man, resourceful in any job, an exceptionally fast worker, and faithful to his employers. If it agreed with this, whatever recommendation the *krites* of Thrakesion had received for the *notarios*, from whatever source, was totally correct. If not, the *krites* should substitute Psellos' words. Psellos knew that his opinion would carry weight

with the *krites*, as their *philia* had often been proved during their long association. Each could be sure of the other's trustworthiness and intelligence.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). A careful, clever, reference for a *notarios* is likely to have been written after 1060.

Moore 292: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 160.

KD 154 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

The *krites* had apparently forgotten their *philia*—but even so, Psellos retained him in his memory, and wrote him letters. The *krites* sent him nothing. This was wrong, and there were limits to the endurance of *philia*. The only reward gained through Psellos by the carrier of the current letter, an old friend, was to be honoured among the *kritai* of Peloponnesos and Hellas. Let the *krites* continue this tradition, proving his *philia* for Psellos, speaking to the man more sincerely and welcoming him more sympathetically, so that he would realize he had gained some benefit from the letter after the *krites* read it. The *krites'* *philia* (or not) for Psellos was his own affair. But the pressures of the times had shown the strength of Psellos' own affection for the *krites*, and might do so again.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There are no dating indications beyond the letter's use of the network.

Moore 434: ms L. Drexel 1940a; Duyé 1972, 169 n. 15; Ljubarskij 1978, 107, 119; Karpozilos 1988, 260 no. V; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 135; Chondridou 2002, 141 n. 143; Ljubarskij 2004, 163, 180.

KD 155 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

To avoid a shock, the *krites* should concentrate and listen carefully or alternatively block his ears to slow reception of the news. Why? Psellos had sent him a *notarios*! Was he amazed, or did he cope with his hands over his ears? Even if the man's arrival was unexpected, even if he opened the door to welcome him personally, he surely was unsurprised by the announcement. Psellos could be restrained in giving such introductions when writing to others, but not to the *krites*, whose devotion to *philia* was complete. Whether it was as perfect as Psellos' own devotion to the *krites*, only a divine voice could tell him. But to business: there was no reason to recommend a good reception for the *notarios*, it was enough to say he was sent by Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). The implication of the initial joke is that sending *notarioi* to Opsikion is a routine matter. This is enough to support a firm date after 1060.

Moore 198: mss L, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 167.

KD 156 TO [ISAAKIOS] KOMNENOS WHEN
HE BEGAN A CAMPAIGN AGAINST
THE PECHENECS

Psellos wrote a long, wordy, and serious letter to Isaakios I as he set out against the Pechenegs. It begins with an elaborate modesty-topos, stressing the great distance from which he approached the emperor, despite the latter's invitation to write. He protested his good faith and apologized for any mistakes. The remainder makes three points. The first is imaginative speculation why Selte had not followed the sensible policy of other Pecheneg leaders in submitting to Isaakios, whose army was powerful enough to cow them, even if he were not the excellent general he was, and whose military skill was such as to overcome any weakness in his army. Was Selte terrified, overconfident, desperate, or—a bold thought—might the submission of other leaders be part of a wider deceitful plan? The others' sincerity must be carefully tested. Psellos then pleaded eloquently to avoid even one Byzantine death in reaching Isaakios' goals. Peaceful methods must be preferred to fighting, as war was unpredictable. Lastly he stressed Isaakios' greater competence to make right decisions on the advice he was giving. He added the citizens' need to have Isaakios present in the city, and his reliance on the empress [Aikaterine] to ease the pain of his absence. He pleaded finally for Isaakios' swift return, as he was not only Psellos' emperor but also in some ways a father.

Date etc.: 1058–9, Isaakios' last campaign. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 59: mss L, U, A. Anastasi 1976, 111–14 (Italian translation); Maltese 1988, 29 n. 12; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 283 n. 27; Grünbart 2005, 111 n. 278, 138 n. 9, 143 n. 54, 241, 242, 255, 256, 288, 359; Jeffreys 2010, 81; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Limousin 2014, 164.

KD 157 [TO A KRITES(?)]

The letter was redundant, a reminder to a *krites* of a favour already agreed by a man who needed no reminding, written so that the *notarios* who was its subject should not come empty-handed. The *krites* had been positive before when they had been together and Psellos asked daily favours, and this letter would keep their *philia* young and flourishing.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Reference to a *notarios* and previous daily favours suggest a date in the 1060s.

Moore 388: mss L, F.

KD 158 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to a suppliant, detailing successes in working on his behalf. The other might think Psellos lax in helping him, but any eyewitness would admire the strength of Psellos' *philia* towards him; a monk who was friend to both of them would confirm this in a letter. Psellos did not claim to have gained concrete help for the man with his words. But as a result Constantine IX was increasingly favourable and spoke against his detractors, Ioannes the logothetes was his supporter and other courtiers joined in his praise. Such achievements were not trivial. Psellos did not cause changes of heart at court, he just made connections between the petitioner's enthusiasm and the emperor's goodness. However he needed to hear more often from the suppliant. He felt deprived of his excellent letters, and needed more—not better, just more—and it was no excuse that he was busy or lacked skill in philosophy or rhetoric. Psellos, as a philosopher, could read the simplest letters as if they were the most arcane prophecies.

Date etc.: c.1050–54. Ioannes the logothetes was appointed by Constantine IX to replace Constantine Leichoudes, dismissed c.1050. This letter is a good antidote to the impression that such communications all occurred under Constantine X (cf. excursus 14).

Moore 425: ms L. Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

KD 159 TO THE *KOURATOR* OF CYPRUS

From the *kourator* of Cyprus' letter Psellos could picture him as if speaking face to face. It had no unnatural coloration. In reading it he could smile, be serious, be happy, and admire, just as he reacted to him in person. The letter pictured him just as a painting portrayed the living form of the prototype; indeed it was better, for it was not made of paint but of immaterial concepts and the pure idea of his words. In the many letters he had recently received to bring them together, Psellos particularly rejoiced to hear that the protégé for whom he asked a favour got more in Cyprus than he requested or the man hoped. He agreed that the favours he had asked were small, maybe too slight from such a correspondent, yet his caution was designed to avoid embarrassment. He had shown the *kourator's* letter to a friend [name suppressed], proud of the friends he had made. The man wept at its goodness and *philia* and prayed it would continue. But the *kourator's* fine words still needed translation into action: why stay in Cyprus, far from home, friends, and emperor, where summer was too hot and (they said) profits always low? He must return to the capital, where the seasons were more varied, where he could win mixed wealth and honour as rewards from the emperor, and Psellos could greet him on his return.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). Discussion of the success of a subordinate and professional advice to the kourator are both marks of a date in the 1060s.

Moore 94: mss L, m⁴. Ljubarskij 1978, 39; Limousin 1999, 358 n. 51; Ljubarskij 2004, 69; Grünbart 2005, 243, 264; Georgiou 2012; Bernard 2015, 185 n. 54.

KD 160 [TO A KRITES(?)]

A friend, probably a *krites*, left the capital, and Psellos in one sense went with him, for he missed him badly. Though he practised philosophy, Psellos was more pained by separation of bodies than pleased by communion of souls. Damn Plato, Aristotle etc. who thought otherwise. He was a man, for whom body was as important as soul. He wanted his friend back. When would he see and hear him again discussing law, philosophy, and literature, all with his great wisdom and eloquence? Psellos had sent a relative to serve the *krites*, so as to further his education and make money. The education was going well, as shown by the Attic clarity of his letters, but his household told Psellos he had made no money—which was crucial for them. Psellos might help to improve his writing, but he needed the *krites*' aid to become more prosperous. Might things be done better? Might the *krites* in future give attention to this side of his work as well as to educational contact with his men, so as to forestall requests like the present?

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.5). The problems of a subordinate and advice to a *krites* to balance profit with other forms of progress suggest a date in the 1060s.

Moore 424: mss L, m⁴. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 160; Ljubarskij 1978, 72; Ljubarskij 2004, 116; Jenkins 2006, 143 n. 30; Kaldellis 2007, 210 n. 66; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71.

KD 161 [TO A KRITES(?)]

A suppliant had asked Psellos some time ago for a letter of recommendation to a *krites*, which he delayed writing, so as not to annoy the recipient. Later he found that the man had somehow acquired an imperial letter, with which Psellos was ashamed to compete, in case he seemed to be setting himself up as more important than the emperor. The letter ends with playful reasons why he did finally write, estimating the effect on the *krites* of receiving the two letters. The *krites* would inevitably do the emperor's bidding, and thus could not but grant the same favour later asked by Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). Discussion of the relative value of *philia* and imperial authority suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 361: ms L. Grünbart 2005, 176 n. 335, 261, 288.

KD 162 [TO A KRITES]

A poor man asked a *krites* for help through Psellos, who was a friend. He was involved in no disputes, was accused of nothing, and had done nothing wrong, but wanted the *krites*' good will just because he lived in his province. The *krites* should grant this effortless favour—for Psellos, for himself and the slightness of the request. In the unlikely event that he was involved in litigation the *krites* should mention Psellos' request.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There are no dating indications beyond the letter's use of the network.

Moore 311: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 230, 265.

KD 163 TO A KRITES

A poor man, Psellos' friend, was unjustly treated. Psellos wrote to another friend, the judge in his case and a just man, saying 'Just do it!'

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There are no dating indications beyond the letter's use of the network.

Moore 313: ms L.

KD 164 TO A HEGOUMENOS

An ex-slave, now a monk, came to Psellos, justifying his plea to be accepted into the monastery of an anonymous *hegoumenos*, according to the will of his former master. The *hegoumenos* affixed his seal to the master's testament, implying that it was valid, but then rejected the monk. Psellos asked the *hegoumenos* to accept the man (who carried the letter), as he had no other means of salvation: who but the *hegoumenos* could save him from his dreadful plight? He stressed that the petitioner should not be despised as an ex-slave, as his soul had the same status as those of the emperors. His action would be rewarded in heaven.

Date etc.: probably after 1060 (excursus 16.2). Dating is suggested by a detailed summary of the case, while the plural 'emperors' suggests that there were more than one (i.e. after 1060), rather than a mere generalization.

Moore 295: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

KD 165 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos loved a relation of his (the letter-carrier) more for his good and straightforward character than for reasons of kinship. He wrote to a *krites*

asking him to offer him sympathy, friendship, and help in collecting tax. True friends with a similar cast of mind and way of life should think themselves related by family as well as friendship, with the obligations which both implied. If the *krites* agreed, he might thus treat Psellos' relation not as an outsider but as one of his own kith and kin.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.3). Interest in help for a subordinate, especially with a positive view of collecting tax, suggest the date.

Moore 305: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 56; Ljubarskij 2004, 181; Grünbart 2005, 264; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 111.

KD 166 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos wrote to a *krites*, introducing a protégé of his. The man had been wronged, as he would tell the *krites* in court, but the story was too long for a letter. However, the man's constant bad luck had changed, as he was going to a judge who took no bribes and ignored personalities in making his judgements. Psellos did not write to request strict justice, which the impartial *krites* gave unbidden, as his character and the law demanded. Yet his purpose was still very important: to mobilize the dimension of *philia*. This did not decide on its own the direction in which the scales would tilt, but in combination with justice would have many other effects: a friendly welcome through *philia* would encourage the man to put his case effectively. He should receive all aid the law allowed.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). Reference to the facts of a case and the comparison between justice and *philia* are the dating criteria used.

Moore 170: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 98, 121; Kazhdan 1994, 211; Saradi 1995, 186 nn. 91–2, 187 n. 101; Chondridou 2002, 142 n. 149; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 150, 182.

KD 167 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos sent another note at the request of a protégé, despite the total success of his first request. They offered the *krites* combined thanks for giving all they had asked. If the protégé was so grateful (making Psellos grateful too) for a small favour, what would he do if he gained much more? The virtuous circle would widen, including all three of them.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16). Maybe connected with KD 166, which it follows in the ms. The dating is based on a virtuous circle involving thanks and further favours.

Moore 251: ms L. Grünbart 2005, 257.

KD 168 TO A FRIEND

A suppliant to the emperor sent a note reminding Psellos of promises he had made to him. Psellos replied, commending the note but saying that he needed no prompting, being already prepared to speak and act for him in every way. He should be hopeful, and by his deeds encourage Psellos to speak and the emperor to be generous.

Date etc.: undated. Such lobbying of the emperor was a regular activity of Psellos: cf. excursus 14.
Moore 427: ms L.

KD 169 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos declared in a letter to a *krites* that real friends help their friends' friends and even more their friends' blood relations. A woman was noble and a relation of Psellos, two reasons why his friend the *krites* should aid her in various trials she faced, giving the estates she owned honourable protection. Such tasks on behalf of strangers were burdensome for the *krites*, but bearable when done for true friends by a man of his virtue and straightforwardness of character.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The only real dating criterion is the use of the network. Similarities with KD 60 may be worth exploring.

Moore 181: ms L. Kazhdan 1994, 211; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 101; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 56; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 110; MICHAEL ANGOLD.

KD 170 TO A MONK

Psellos told a monk that he had not forgotten to write to him, but had received nothing from him. Now a letter had come, Psellos was delighted and replied with pleasure. Correspondence with holy fathers was as necessary for virtue as contact with a natural father. He stressed that his desire for tonsure was real; while it was delayed by worldly thoughts, it would eventually be realized. He apologized for not meeting a visitor to the capital [name suppressed] whom the monk advised him to see. He gave thanks for a gift of fruit and answered it with coins, getting the best of the deal. Holy fathers had the advantage in contemplation of God, but a disadvantage in transactions with men.

Date etc.: 1052–4, an early stage of Psellos' plans for tonsure (excursus 11).

Moore 466: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 99; Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 34; Ljubarskij 2004, 151–2; Grünbart 2005, 339; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

KD 171 [TO A KRITES]

A protégé of Psellos [name suppressed], with a number of his relatives, had been badly injured by one of his neighbours. Not only punches and blows from stones, but even serious, life-threatening stab wounds were listed in the written testimony; it would be no surprise if the victim had suffered loss of money and possessions. Psellos wrote to request a full judicial investigation by the relevant *krites*, and action against the perpetrator. This was prompted both by justice and by *philia* towards Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The summarizing of the case suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 270: ms L. Weiss 1973, 61 n. 192; Ljubarskij 1978, 121; Kazhdan 1994, 210; Ljubarskij 2004, 182.

KD 172 [TO A KRITES OF MACEDONIA]

Psellos had given an old friend of his [name suppressed] no benefit when alive, but now that he had died, he wrote to an official in Macedonia (probably the *krites*), asking him to aid his widow in recovering as much as possible of his estate. If she received no more help in Macedonia than she had in Lykandos, she should leave at once. He asked the *krites* to list all his friend possessed, including personal wealth and money from collecting tax, and by his edict to discover any debts to the treasury. He realized that recovery of losses was hard after their owner's death, when he could no longer be questioned: but he was confident that the *krites* would search thoroughly and find everything, to protect both the treasury and the man's estate.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.2 and 16.3). Seeking help for a subordinate's widow, with a positive attitude to tax, are the main dating features.

Moore 271: ms L. Weiss 1973, 52 n. 157; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 168.

KD 173 [TO A KRITES]

Even before his *notarios* wrote, Psellos knew the *krites* would treat him properly. He was not a man to kiss his friends when present, but loathe them when absent: he was consistently affectionate. That is why Psellos made him a good friend. This knowledge, he told the *krites*, was now confirmed by his *notarios*, who thanked him heartily by letter because, through Psellos, he had gained a master like the *krites*. Psellos knew the *krites* would now redouble the kindnesses shown to the *notarios*. Having been so generous with help without knowing of the *notarios*' gratitude, he would surely be yet

more generous when he heard of it. This would result both from his character and from Psellos' request.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.1). To benefit a *notarios* by a virtuous circle based on gratitude is a sign of the 1060s.

Moore 172: ms L. Weiss 1973, 121 n. 411; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1298; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 266.

KD 174 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos told the *krites* of the great gratitude shown him by the *notarios*, Psellos' protégé. He asked the *krites* to increase his generosity to him to match that gratitude. It would be unnecessary to repeat the request: he knew the *krites' philia* was such that one note would suffice, despite Psellos' strong desire to help the *notarios*. Thus he asked that the *krites* treat the man as an old and much-loved associate, rather than a new acquaintance. He was new to the work, and would find it very hard, unless given careful treatment by the *krites*, and assurances that he was a friend of his sponsor. This process would be helped by his industrious and flexible attitude. If the *krites* was kind to him he would have good service from him, not only because of his knowledge but also through his innate character.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). This request for careful treatment of a *notarios*, based on a virtuous circle, was probably sent after 1060.

Moore 100: ms L. Weiss 1973, 119 n. 401 (partial German translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 257, 265.

KD 175 [TO A KRITES(?)]

He first met this protégé [name suppressed], he told a *krites*, as a neighbour, and found his character compatible with his own. He was truthful, not disruptive, straightforward in character, and without vices. Thus Psellos became his close friend and patron. Hearing this, the *krites* would know what he should add: a kind welcome to him as a friend and the provision of help. The man was extremely loyal to superiors and determined to finish tasks entrusted to him. He should be given all possible aid to complete his duties punctually before leaving the capital. The *krites* should remain Psellos' beloved friend.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). This character reference for a potential subordinate suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 269: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 56, 361 n. 72; Ljubarskij 2004, 179; Grünbart 2005, 219.

KD 176 [TO AN OFFICIAL]

Psellos told an official that he had been very pleased to be asked by the letter-carrier [name suppressed] for a letter to him. He was sure (as was the letter-carrier) that the official, a man who showed *philia* towards Psellos, would give some benefit as a result of the request. Thus he confidently wrote and sent the letter. If the official acted as expected, both he and Psellos would shine more brightly in the heaven of *philia*; if not—but Psellos always thought the best of him.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 183: ms L.

KD 177 TO A FRIEND

Psellos reassured his friend, who had been very unhappy and might be afraid that the letter brought bad news: God had gradually and with difficulty raised Psellos from the dead after a long fever. In contrast with biblical miracles, the recovery had been slow. The symptoms (heart pain, headache, breathing problems, a stitch in his side, and fever), were all much reduced or had disappeared (apart from the fever), so he expected complete recuperation. He now knew that he would see again his beloved Horaia Pege, would enjoy the holy ground of its church, would live, weeping, near his tomb, and would dine with his correspondent before he died (whether the latter wished to or not).

Date etc.: After 1055, probably 1055–9. Psellos is looking back to his time at Horaia Pege, and this may be the same illness referred to in KD 228 and S 49.

Moore 173: ms L. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 149 n. 516; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Gautier 1975, 329; Ljubarskij 1978, 56 n. 23; Volk 1990, 44, 201 n. 11, 443 n. 1, 444–7; Schminck 2001, 196 nn. 46–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 92 n. 31; Külzer 2008, 574 n. 20; Papaioannou 2013, 10, 195 n. 10; Jeffreys 2017a, 46 n. 24.

KD 178 TO A RELATION

Psellos told a relation of his that purest friendship, kinship, and honesty meant carrying out perfectly and without fail favours asked by friends and relations. If his correspondent had wanted to refuse and sought excuses, plenty were available. He thanked him warmly as the best of relations, and wanted to reciprocate, so that he could win the same kind of honour for himself.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 488: ms L.

KD 179 [TO A KRITES(?)]

If the *krites* ever wanted with one blow to satisfy the needs of friendship and win salvation, the chance was at hand: he should aid the letter-carrier, friend of the *krites'* friend Psellos, after the unexpected disaster which had changed his life. The excellent *krites*, warm in friendship and swift to pity, should show these characteristics and do his duty to Psellos and his friend, a good man turning to the good before God.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The only dating criterion is the use of the network.

Moore 123: ms L. Grünbart 2005, 360.

KD 180 UNADDRESSED

He asked a friend to support a musician (the letter-carrier) and not let him come to harm. He was not one to discourse on musical theory; his skill was not in his tongue but in his hands, which tuned strings and made harmony for the ear. The friend should treat him well, not just as a musician but as a good man recommended by Psellos.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 480: ms L.

KD 181 [TO A KRITES(?)]

When making recommendations to others, Psellos explained why he was writing and the nature of the request, and hoped for favourable results. But with the *krites* to whom he wrote now, he only had to express concern about a letter-carrier and ask for him to be treated justly. The *krites* would know this would happen and Psellos would not be put to shame. No more was needed between good, educated friends. He sent best wishes.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No dating criteria apart from use of the network.

Moore 485: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Ljubarskij 2004, 181.

KD 182 [TO A KRITES]

A man [name suppressed] died while his son was absent on very important business in the capital, so that the household was left unprotected. Greedy

neighbours and other malefactors used various legal excuses to seize all their property. Psellos wrote to the relevant *krites*, under pressure from the family of the deceased, first apologizing for seeming to insult him by telling him how to protect the property of those left as orphans. He asked him on no account to accept the neighbours' action, whatever apparently good justifications they offered, but to stop developments till the son finished his business and returned to recover his patrimony. He ended the letter by apologizing again for asking the *krites* to do what he would have done without a request. Psellos was at the mercy of the aggrieved family, who would not accept any of his assurances that the matter would be well handled. They were the main subject of the letter, not the story of the orphan son.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The information and advice on judicial action suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 400: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168.

KD 183 TO AN OFFICIAL [*KRITES?*]

Psellos wrote to an official, saying that he was testing his *philia* for the first and last time. If he and his subordinates treated Psellos' letter-carrier well, by the rules of *philia*, then he would at once be called a friend. If he ignored or dismissed him, Psellos would know his promises were mere words, and would not trouble him again, cutting him at once from his list of friends.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There is no dating evidence beyond use of the network.

Moore 441: ms L. Grünbart 2005, 346.

KD 184 [TO A *KRITES*]

Psellos wrote to a *krites* with a recommendation. A man was known to him, and offered support by him, so that by the strict law of *philia*, the *krites*, Psellos' friend, should do the same. The man was also born and bred in the *krites*' theme. For both these reasons the *krites* should give him special attention, both as a thematic official to his theme's inhabitants, and as one recommended by his friend Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There is no dating evidence beyond use of the network.

Moore 124: ms L. Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Ljubarskij 2004, 181.

KD 185 TO PARASPONDYLOS
THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Psellos praised Leon as a splendid combination of virtue, knowledge, and (speaking ironically) persuasive eloquence, controlling the whole world with his words. He was a demigod living on high yet coming down to earth, but claiming only earthly interests to hide his heavenly status. Worse still, though possessing profound sympathy, the greatest of virtues, he concealed it from his hearers by successful dissimulation. What is more, he used Attic Greek (or more recondite dialects) for lofty concepts, while trying in vain to pretend ignorance of such tongues. He moved as leader among divine beings, yet acted as if he had no place there. Psellos told him not to try this on with him, for he was not fooled easily or made to change his mind. Whatever Leon did to others, he must show Psellos the truth. Psellos recognized the demigod, even if Leon changed his appearance. Leon could repeat his claims again and again, but Psellos would not change his views. He wanted to experience Leon's inborn goodness and frequent greetings, the former in prayers, the latter in letters.

Date etc.: c.1053–6. A masterpiece of flattery larded with irony. Reinsch points out that attributing 'persuasive eloquence' to Leon stands in blatant contradiction to *Chronographia* VI 209.6–19, while 'demigod' is used pejoratively to criticize monkish behaviour in *Chronographia* VI 221.7. c.1053–6 (excursus 12). Eulogies of this kind are hard to date during the main period of Psellos' contact with Leon.

Moore 240: ms L. Kassel 1977, 93 no. 600; Ljubarskij 1978, 91; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 341–2 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 142; Grünbart 2005, 254, 296; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5; DIETHER REINSCH.

KD 186 TO THE *KAISAR* IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to Ioannes *kaisar*, having cut through the mystery and recognized the truth, that he must completely change his previous tactics. Having before derided and abused hunting and begged Ioannes to read, Psellos now gave the opposite advice. Ioannes must enjoy hunting on horseback, with falcons and various breeds of dog. He should use different tactics and weapons against all kinds of prey, mainly for the table. A long list of animals to hunt is supplied, some with learned notes from ancient literature. This hunting would help Psellos satisfy the Lamiai, who smell game, and get them out of his house.

Date etc.: c.1068–9 (excursus 6). After the accession of Romanos IV Ioannes left the capital for hunting on his estates. This letter (like S 71 and S 156) no longer tries to turn him against hunting, which seem to fit this time.

Moore 510: mss V, v⁴. Ljubarskij 1978, 71; Volk 1990, 132 n. 12, 368 n. 15; Ljubarskij 2004, 114; Bernard 2011a, 6 n. 14; Papaioannou 2011, 48 n. 17.

KD 187 TO THE KRITES OF OPSIKION

A *krites* of Opsikion had asked Psellos about the construction of beds: why is the head higher than the foot? Why were aristocratic beds made of dressed timber filled with a mesh of cords? Psellos began with theoretical considerations, stressing the importance of the head, of its higher position in the upright stance, of the relative elevations of the points of the compass, of the similarity of the open mesh to the air, and so on. However he admitted that early bed-builders may have thought more of comfort than philosophy, though philosophy sourced its inspiration not only from springs but from rocks too.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There is no dating evidence beyond use of the network.

Moore 407: mss L, V, v⁴. Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 104; Limousin 1999, 358 n. 51; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 159; Papaioannou 2013, 6 n. 14; Bernard 2017, 23.

KD 188 TO THE EMPEROR MICHAEL VII

Michael VII asked Psellos to examine and interpret a carved stone relief with an inscription. Psellos wrote a report (not really a letter), offering one classical and one ‘magic’ interpretation. In the first, he recorded the appearance of the stone in great detail, identifying the scene as Odysseus with drawn sword, resisting Circe and holding *moly*. He gave the emperor the narrative context in a rather simplistic way, twice quoting lines of Homer, linking them to details of the scene, and set out the preserved letters of the inscription, especially the word *moly*. His alternative ‘magical’ interpretation would be typical of Basileios the ‘magician’: Psellos was surprised that Basileios had not so far expressed an opinion on the stone. From that point of view, what he called Circe’s throne might be an altar holding an animal to be sacrificed by a priest with the sword in honour of peace. He repeated that the inscription was in Greek. He claimed to have much more to say on the stone, but ended with a wish that the emperor should prefer peace to war.

Date etc.: c.1072–5. Note the simplistic identifications (e.g. Hermes), showing a patronizing attitude to the imperial recipient. Might Basileios the magician be a young Basileios the Bogomil (Dagron and Angold)? This is not really a letter, and is also edited in Psellos, *Oratoria minora*, no. 32.

Moore 926: mss V, Z, v⁴. Ljubarskij 1978, 115; Dagron 1983; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 199; Dostálová 1986; Angold 1995, 479 n. 43; Angelidi 1998, 77 n. 7; Ljubarskij 2004, 174–5; Angelidi 2005, 229–37 (extensive English translations); Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10, 143 n. 55, 249, 288; Kaldellis 2009, 185 n. 32.

KD 189 TO HIS SPIRITUAL SON (?)

Psellos called the recipient of the letter 'son', and accepted paternal responsibility. The link of kinship and rank was confirmed when the recipient called him 'father' and 'lord', which meant that he had to play the role to the fullest extent. Psellos spoke of the achievements of the son, recognized by the Romans, but regarded his own role, that of encomiast, as equally important. He too achieved military successes, but in words, and tamed barbarians, but at home. The son would prefer easy recognition of his achievements by those who had done such deeds in the past, but it was hard for the old to accept young generals as their equals. There would always be some resistance, and it was those who achieved something in this conflict of generations who would be recognized. It was hard to recognize success until this struggle had been won. As the son was lucky to have Psellos' tongue to elaborate his achievements, so Psellos was lucky to have the emperor to celebrate with his encomia. He wished his correspondent repeated successes against his enemies, the building of fortresses, and the avoidance of evil fortune.

Date etc.: c.1068–71 (?). The recipient is hard to identify. Both the address in the mss and the content of the letter exclude Psellos' adoptive family. Any of the Byzantine aristocracy might have chosen him as spiritual father to a son. As a monk, he could easily be called by anybody 'father' and 'lord', the words used by the 'son' in the text. The activities of the 'son' seem imperial in scope (fighting barbarians, receiving encomia etc.), though he seems twice to be contrasted with the 'emperor'. The best solution coming to mind is that the recipient was his student Michael VII as co-emperor with Romanos IV, between 1068–71, or one of his brothers, Konstas and Andronikos. An elderly tutor who was a monk and a young pupil, though a co-emperor, could easily have called each other 'father' and 'son', and most of the rest of the letter would fit. Psellos, friend of Constantine X, would feel responsibility towards his sons, especially in regard to Romanos, the primary emperor (cf. KD 207). The dynamic profile given to the 'son' also suggests one of several generals appearing in the 1070s, but none is recorded with special links to Psellos.

Moore 85: mss V, v⁴. Grünbart 2005, 344; Bernard 2017, 34; MARC LAUXTERMANN.

KD 190 TO IOANNES, METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos said it was characteristic of Mauropous' wisdom to tell others not to indulge in the philosophy of fine words, but to break his own rule by writing brilliant letters. The wise agreed that an older form of wisdom was the ordering of basic Neoplatonist elements. But Mauropous did otherwise in connection with Psellos in an absolute way. He did not create his pupil like the Platonic demiurge with reference to an exemplary cause, but by insisting on his own character, or an even higher standard through a more divine power, with increasing demands of intellect and stamina. Thus wisdom was supreme, and Psellos' character resembled his teacher's. Mauropous was usually stationary, seated above heaven, while Psellos rent the clouds with thunderous

words; but neither stance was always good. Homer situated creation on Olympus, the home of his gods, thus freeing it from thunder and lightning. Mauropous should not lower himself through the air to his pupils, but raise them up to him, unaffected by their mutability but moulding them by his own stability. But these words were more play than serious comment, adding Mauropous' own games to a letter sent to him. Two important matters: where was Mauropous and what was he doing, without Psellos? As for isolation, Psellos, despite the advantages of the capital, would swap many companions for Mauropous, a true Hellene at Euchaita (unless he refused the see), just as would a Briton or Italian for his fellow countrymen. Both Psellos and Mauropous wrote praise of the other which might be called exaggerated. If Mauropous wanted Psellos' letters, Myron was working hard on them, and would soon bind them into a volume.

Date etc.: 1049–50. Mauropous was already destined for Euchaita, but does not yet seem to have accepted the see (and Psellos was nervous he would refuse it).

Moore 450: ms O. Weiss 1973, 101 n. 324; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6, 145; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 14; Karpozilos 1990, 23 n. 73; Kazhdan 1993, 91–2; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 106; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7, 217; Grünbart 2005, 180 n. 368, 322, 358; Kaldellis 2007, 221 n. 93; Papaioannou 2013, 80 n. 88; Bernard 2015, 190 n. 90, 191 n. 91; Lauxtermann 2017, 103, 104, 105, 107.

KD 191 TO IOANNES XIPHILINOS

Psellos was not sure whether not speaking or writing to Xiphilinos was a philosophical act or a sign of boorishness. Some monks preferred silence, others conversation: silence seemed a theoretical virtue, speech more practical. The great Cappadocians alternately communed alone with God and together, sometimes at their heavenly anchor in silence, sometimes at an earthly anchor with letters. After this introduction he analysed Xiphilinos, who (he thought) followed both systems. Psellos did not know the time when his friend's boat arrived so as to hand in his letter of *philia*, while Xiphilinos' soul, having made his boat fast to the mooring on high, considered everything else unnecessary. The letter's reception probably depended on Xiphilinos' mood. If he felt down-to-earth, the letter would comfort him, just like Plato's lotus, plane, and myrtle. If he was still near heaven, observing the world of the blessed, the letter would not be read till he returned. So writing was not redundant, nor did Psellos' failure to write convict him of a lack of *philia*. His defence depended on Xiphilinos' high religious sense, yet their sharing of *philia* should be invincible. But Psellos was lost to Xiphilinos, divided from his kindred soul—and himself divided in soul, with blood and pain. Body parts are linked, but soul parts join seamlessly together, making division painful: divided souls must perish or leave their bodies. The only remedy is a life of the mind, consisting of memory, imagination, and intellect, things which know no

boundaries. Europe and Libya have no common boundary, but a European or Libyan may go back and forth, abolishing distance. It was the same with the distance from the capital to Olympos, too far for physical sight, yet capable of linkage by philosophy and *philia* allowing contact to be maintained. How could he bear separation? His pain fluctuated from the divine to the animal. Sometimes he was keen to join Xiphilinos at once; at other times he feared the impulse was not from God and he would later repent. Other factors were love of possessions and glory, not to mention his adoptive daughter. Removal to Olympos was very desirable yet also very terrible. He congratulated Xiphilinos on the holiness and predictability of monastic life, unlike his own unstable world, where he was always uncomfortable, ignored, and marginalized. He envied him, often saying ‘Blessed Xiphilinos!’, hoping to enjoy his benefits to the full, with him in this world and later with God.

Date etc.: 1052–4, as Psellos planned to retire as a monk to Olympos (excursus 11).

Moore 341: ms O. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 14, 158 n. 34, 161–2, 165; Criscuolo 1975a; Ljubarskij 1978, 49, 52–3, 173; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 107; Ljubarskij 2004, 84, 88–9, 252; Angelidi 2005, 227 n. 1; Grünbart 2005, 67 n. 42, 219, 296, 357; Jenkins 2006, 143 n. 29; Kaldellis 2007, 192 n. 2; Papaioannou 2011, 53 n. 33; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 15; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23, 176–8; Jeffreys 2017a, 44 n. 16, 48.

KD 192 UNADDRESSED

Not a letter (there is no expressed or implied recipient), but the description of a beautiful open space in a natural setting. The first-person narrator is charmed by flowers, trees, birds, and the whole scene. All his senses in turn are captivated by the experience.

Date etc.: undatable.

Moore 282: ms O. Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 211; Papaioannou 2013, 194.

KD 193 UNADDRESSED

Not a letter (there is no recipient), but a description of the beautiful setting of Byzantion (Constantinople), the ‘eye of the oikoumene’—a judgement only understood by those who have travelled elsewhere. Each of the city’s delights varies, and changes for the worse as you leave the city boundaries. It is, as it were, the very centre of the world: nobody had got this right, Delphoi having falsely claimed that status. Byzantion is like a holy sanctuary where divine worship is offered by winds, shores, and sea, and by the air, which gently surrounds the city with a mixture of all its delightful qualities. Winds from all points of the compass meet precisely there, and the Queen of cities calmly uses them as her guards. The sea receives the river Alpheios without spoiling its

quality with salt. She makes diplomatic emissaries better, attracting them to her own nature.

Date etc.: undatable.

Moore 369: ms O.

KD 194 UNADDRESSED

Not a letter (there is no recipient), but a description of an icon, the glory of his monastery of Kathara. Psellos claimed to be a connoisseur of icons, but even he was thunderstruck and stunned by its unspeakable beauty. The subject was the Theotokos. He did not know if it was a good likeness, but its mixture of colours was a splendid imitation of flesh. His discussion explicitly concentrates more on his reception of its beauty than the details he saw. Its effect was more spiritual than visual, more to surprise the beholder than to outline a picture. The Theotokos was shown conventionally, reverencing her son, rousing men to pity. She showed no tension or mourning, but calmly extended her arms, receiving grace and benediction, her eyes miraculously looking in all directions. She showed a mixture of heaven and earth, including Christ with whom she interceded and mankind for whom she interceded. This he saw at the first sight of the icon, and his eyes had been increasingly overwhelmed by it. It was a blessing for Kathara and the whole world.

Date etc.: c.1054–6. For Kathara, see p. 54.

Moore 108: ms O. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 199; Cutler and Browning 1992, 27–8 (partial English translation); Fisher 1994, 47 n. 16; Angold 1995, 33 n. 33; Walker 2004, 66 n. 40; Angelidi 2005, 228 nn. 10–11; Barber 2006, 118 n. 6; Papaioannou 2013, 194 n. 9; Jeffreys 2017a, 54.

KD 195 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to a man, claiming that he was rightly condemned by some people as a dog, a shameless, greedy, howling Arabian dog: he did not bite wolves like himself but ate sheep, did not torment the worthless but respectable and peaceful people. However a way had been found by ancient sages to stop dogs that ate sheep and snapped at the unfortunate so as to destroy them. As with a scorpion or poisonous snake, such people had a sting and poison and must be crushed by Providence before they can transmit their evil to others, causing widespread destruction. He should be dashed against a rock like a poisonous spider, in case he bit someone, and made him shrivel and lose his speech.

Date etc.: undated. I have no idea who might be the addressee.

Moore 228: ms O.

KD 196 UNADDRESSED

This mysterious scene, which is not a letter, involves two men, one (first-person, probably not Psellos) despondently sleeping, maybe drugged (by mandragora or Homeric lotus) or under a spell, and the other (second-person), who may have cast the spell and now woken him up. The second man was asked to write more effective literary Sirens than in Homer, and apply them to the first. The first wanted to have their harmonious song ringing in his ears, not flying away or wasted in the air.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 44: ms O. Volk 1990, 209 n. 27; Sarres 2005, 405 n. 52.

KD 197 UNADDRESSED

Psellos explained shooting stars to a correspondent, maybe a student. The star which seems to fall from heaven at night is movement and ignition of dry and smoky vapours. Just as rain etc. comes from heavy and moist exhalations from the earth that fall at a lower level, so drier and more fiery vapours, being lighter, rise higher and fall obliquely as different kinds of shooting stars. Just as smoke on earth may be set on fire when it moves, so smoky exhalations in heaven may ignite and inflame neighbouring bodies of smoke. A seed of fire falling on thick cloud may be squeezed out and resemble a falling star. The fire falls obliquely because it is light and so seeks a higher path than that which falls straight down.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 467: ms O. Volk 1990, 289–90 n. 4; Papaioannou 2013, 6 n. 14.

KD 198 TO A FRIEND

He told a lay friend he was not completely free of the leopard. The leopard was still running wild, not in foreign Assyria, but in Psellos' usual haunts—the Academy and the Stoa (so to say), the palace, worse still his home, even his bed, cutting off all escape, roaring alarmingly and changing shape. If he had submitted to it, so as to tame it, it was ferocious enough to savage him in the middle of the city. Any sudden movement, even a conciliatory one, would have made things worse. It was making him a monk, having escaped from its keepers, but God via his correspondent brought him to safety, or he would have been totally exposed, not to its claws, but its slanders and dangerous innuendos. Psellos liked to be with his peers when practising rhetoric, and had avoided

public gatherings, but now was the centre of everyone's attention. He was under constant attack from all sides in his own city. His freedom and *proedria* had a negative effect. The city felt like a net to capture him and places of asylum implied treachery. Where others were safe he felt threatened. The palace nurtured plots against him, where a snake sloughed its skin and hid in its every corner to poison him with a bite—not just on his heel, as in the Bible. The whole world and nature were turning against him. The male snake showed no jealousy at all, but was glad to see the female full of Bacchic fury, unleashing all her jealous rage against him and making every part of life impossible. While his friend might smile at this, Psellos wept, really afraid of her poison. He did not like life in the public eye, uncomfortable because his respectable personality did not tally with this erotic game. He hoped his friend enjoyed his account.

Date etc.: 1155–6 (?) (excursuses 9 and 11). This leopard has so many symbolic roles that it is hard to find place for a real animal (a pet, according to Papaioannou). The background reads more like the persecution Psellos suffered as he left the monastery than the comparative calm of the reign of Isaakios I, when he became *proedros*: cf. '*proedria*'. This is probably a reference to his original title '*proedros* of the philosophers' (as in Attaleiates), which later became 'consul of the philosophers' (see excursus 9).

Moore 252: ms O. Weiss 1973, 22 n. 62; Ljubarskij 1978, 46; Maltese 1989, 192 III(a); Volk 1990, 4 n. 4, 12 n. 27; Ljubarskij 2004, 79; Papaioannou 2013, 11 n. 28, 12, 145 n. 58; Bernard 2015, 190 n. 86; Lauxtermann 2017, 113 n. 79; Lauxtermann 2017a, 5 nn. 9 and 12, 6; MARC LAUXTERMANN.

KD 199 TO A FRIEND

Psellos spoke to a friend of the intellectual fire kindled by him, which seemed to consume stone and everything else, but was now extinguished. He asked that it should be lit again and blaze high. He had given his friend kindling and a spark, and he must now see the resultant advantage. For the intellectual, the supreme benefit was a word uttered from the lips of a friend. He wanted more words and constant activity from his chattering swallow, watering his thirsty colleagues by opening up his stream of intellectual springs, but not so much as to put out the fire or burn the furnace. His friend should at times burn him by the fire of desire and at other times cool his thirst by floods of speech. Thus he wanted to be both burned and drenched.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 328: ms O. Grünbart 2005, 218.

KD 200 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

The *krites* claimed to have sent letters before the last, but Psellos said he had received none. The recent letter was the first, for he swore he would never

miss a chance to work on their *philia* by replying to any letter. Rather than accusing Psellos, the *krites* should find more sensible carriers. He explained the philosopher's approach to friendship, which kept the beloved friend in his heart, and could meet him and converse whenever and wherever he wished, even in India or at the ends of the earth. The *krites* was not really away from the capital. Despite this system, the *krites* might want a personal meeting, and Psellos announced that it was possible. The emperor was well-disposed, and might accept a request from the *krites* for home leave, if he wanted it. Psellos was ill, immobilized by bad legs, unable to climb stairs. This sickness would pass, but it could last a long time. He wished the *krites* good health, and asked him to care for his estates, Kathara, Kellia and Medikion, especially Kellia, which, as he had complained in another letter, he had heard the *krites* might tax, though none of his predecessors had done so.

Date etc.: nw c.1056–8. Note that Psellos can give information on imperial policy (perhaps under Isaakios I?); cf. excursus 16.4. The situation seems similar to that of K 108, which may be the other letter mentioned at the end. For Psellos' three monasteries, see pp. 54–6.

Moore 139: ms O. Ahrweiler 1967, 25 (x2); Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 24, 101, 104, 109; Volk 1990, 430 n. 5; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 64; Ljubarskij 2004, 50 n. 26, 155, 160, 167; Grünbart 2005, 218; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27, 195 n. 10; Jeffreys 2017a, 54–5.

KD 201 TO THE *PROTOASEKRETIS*

The nuns of Sakelline had been demanding for some time that Psellos renew their *sigillion*, and so he applied to the *protoasekretis*, comparing the latter's traditional and masculine Roman identity (apparently seen in the vocabulary of a text he had sent) with the feminine Persian ways of the nuns, like Turks wailing to celebrate a victory. He could defeat them, he claimed, but the victory would be a really black one. St Lupicinus was famous for dealing harshly with nuns. By contrast, Psellos, not a man of stone or oak but a weak, soft individual, asked in emotive terms derived from the Psalms for the *sigillion* as salvation, for he was facing a whole convent. Adam was deceived by one Eve: what would happen to Psellos? If the *sigillion* was not written soon, the rot would set in and extend as far as the *protoasekretis*. Delay would condemn Psellos to a grim fate.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 15.3). Psellos is exploring issues of gender, which are usually dated after 1060.

Moore 440: ms O. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 117 n. 393; Gautier 1976a, 97 n. 44; Maltese 1989, 192, III(b); Papaioannou 2000, 138 n. 22; Grünbart 2005, 43 n. 84, 65 n. 39, 85 n. 61, 108 n. 258, 235, 319; Riedinger 2010, 6–8 (French translation); Papaioannou 2013, 203 n. 36, 215 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

KD 202 TO THE EMPEROR

Psellos asked the emperor (Constantine X or Isaakios I) to remove the monastery of Medikion from him. He could not bear the emperor's generosity, for the cup was overflowing. Psellos asked for the transfer of Medikion to his beloved Anastasios Lizix *vestarches*, to show him that burdens laid on them by the emperor could be light and lucrative rather than loss-making.

Date etc.: c.1059–60 (excursus 2). There is probably irony here. For Medikion, see pp. 53–4, 55.

Moore 366: ms O. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 148 n. 509; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10; Pitarakis 2009, 174 n. 28; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27; Limousin 2014, 174 n. 64; Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30.

KD 203 UNADDRESSED

Psellos replied to a question, perhaps from a student: if air is warmed by movement, why do we feel cold when in a draught, when the moving air should make our bodies warmer? He answered that the part of our environment touching our bodies is kept permanently warm by heat emanating from us, while the rest remains cooler. Thus when a draught moves the former part away and replaces it by air that has not come into contact with us, it makes us cooler. By contrast, in the baths, the surrounding air brought in is hotter and warms us. Normally, the movement of the air merely removes the air that has been warmed by us and replaces it with other air, which makes us colder.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 101: ms O. Papaioannou 2013, 6 n. 14.

KD 204 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wondered how to address an ex-student, after his recent splendid promotion. No title seemed adequate. He decided on 'son', reflecting some credit on himself. His son had once tried to help the monk Nikolaos and have him reinstated in the Hodegon monastery. Psellos had now championed Nikolaos and had written carefully to the patriarch to argue for his reinstatement. His son should be consistent with his past policy and send a plea to support Psellos' letter. The double application from two such men (why not boast?) would have increased chances of persuading the patriarch, who would probably not refuse. He ended the letter with thoughts on the similarities and chiefly the differences between the positions of subordinate and leader. Once an excellent aide, his son would now be an exemplary leader.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Might this be one of the children of Eudokia, e.g. Andronikos when he was crowned emperor? Attempts to rescind monastic exclusions belong after 1060. The excluded Nikolaos of S 61 is from Antioch, while this man is probably from the capital.

Moore 342: ms O. Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Grünbart 2005, 344; Bernard 2017, 36; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

KD 205 TO A *HEGOUMENOS*

Psellos wondered if he was to blame, for making the same request twice with no response, or if the *hegoumenos* was guilty of an offence against the laws of *philia* by ignoring his letters. But Psellos was surely guilty as he was trying a third time, just as prayers to God were repeated in celebrating the liturgy. He needed a reply over the exclusion of Kallinikos from the *hegoumenos*' monastery, however completely evil he was. It was wrong to dismiss him unheard: surely any Christian leader, in imitation of Christ, must think of reform and healing, rather than banishment beyond all help? Was he afraid that Kallinikos would infect others? But the man was asking for help, and specifically the help of the *hegoumenos*. The sinner he punished had repented. The *hegoumenos* should imitate Christ's clemency. There was no need to kill the fatted calf. The *hegoumenos* might be son of a tax-collector and thus beyond repeated requests, but there had to be some Christian way for a man who was banished to recover his favour.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Attempts to rescind monastic exclusions belong after 1060.

Moore 343: ms O. Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Grünbart 2005, 282, 358, 361; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

KD 206 UNADDRESSED

Psellos offered a man two alternatives, cheese or a letter, not both, unless he was an extreme glutton. The letter gave a 'philosophical' analysis of the origin and manufacture of cheese. It began from the physiology of cows, how the milk was conveyed to the teats with an admixture of blood, and was immediately made available to the new-born calf. It continued with the herdsman's skill in assuring the cows a plentiful supply of good grass and water. He then passed on to the cheesemaker's art, including some detail and showing why Paphlagonian cheese had holes in it. He ended with playful philosophy, fitting cheese into ancient theories of the soul. After all this mental cheese he gave him the physical cheese as well.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 337: ms O. Karpozilos 1984, 26 n. 71; Volk 1990, 286–8; Chernoglazov 2011, 63.

KD 207 UNADDRESSED

The provision of matter for the encomium was due to Psellos' 'son' (to whom he wrote), while it was organized by Psellos himself. Both sides of their correspondence had been well kept up and duties performed. Psellos' son was much discussed in the city: other encomiasts wanted to write about him, but only Psellos had skill as well as will, fulfilling expectations. The Romans' lands were once protected by barriers, natural or built, which barbarians dared not cross. But now the perimeter was breached, and the Euphrates and Danube were no longer barriers. Without borders, others had flooded in and all lived together in confusion. What was worse, through Roman ignorance, it was the barbarians who had the upper hand. But now things had changed. His son had organized resistance, and made well-prepared and coordinated attacks that achieved more than expected. The Roman world was again defended, and the barbarians were now afraid to approach the new and effective boundaries—a wonderful achievement. He would say no more, so as not to bore his audience. The whole city would bear witness to the truth of what he said, because everyone had heard his words.

Date etc.: maybe 1068–71. Some similarities with KD 189, but this letter fits less well with Eudokia's children before 1071 (even in an encomium). The historical context, though detailed, is hard to identify.

Moore 483: ms. O. Stephenson 2003, 109 n. 1 (partial English translation); Grünbart 2005, 299, 331.

KD 208 (= S 56) To the patriarch Michael Keroularios [see S 56 and following letters]

PSELLOS AS WASP'S NEST (4 LETTERS)

These letters were probably written within a month or so. They probably belong to the reign of Constantine IX, around 1045–7 (see under KD 209).

KD 209 Kyritses to Psellos

This is not a letter of Psellos, but one written to him by his pupil Kyritses, which set off three of Psellos' own. Kyritses was an advanced pupil, and hoped he was emerging from Psellos' shadow, despite his master's massive reputation. He felt particularly confident within his own speciality of law. He attempts in the space of a brief letter to establish his own voice against his teacher's words and make a plea for recognition, basing himself particularly on the tenth book of the Basilica. But the phrase which annoyed

Psellos most was the first—that in criticizing him Kyritses was rousing a wasp’s nest against himself.

Date etc.: c.1045–7?; cf. excursus 5. The earlier limit is suggested for these four letters because Psellos’ pupils are unlikely before then to have reached the maturity shown by Kyritses. The later limit reflects the way in which Psellos is affected by Kyritses’ words: he may not yet hold his philosophical chair. And why, after 1047, would Kyritses not attach himself to the law-school and the nomophylax?

Moore 279: mss O, A. Weiss 1973, 34 n. 106; Kazhdan 1993, 97; Grünbart 2005, 111 n. 277, 170 n. 276, 179 n. 358, 258, 299; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Bernard 2017, 24.

KD 210 To Kyritses

Kyritses’ letter (KD 209) provoked a bad-tempered reply from Psellos, who accused him (after several readings) of a lack of coherence, and in particular behaviour inconsistent with the teacher–student relationship he claimed to accept, particularly in philosophy. He attacked Kyritses’ work for plagiarism of his own and for imprecise wording. His objections were small, verbal points, not the issues of content which Kyritses seems to have in mind. He tried to block his attempt to achieve individuality as having failed, and told him to return to the status of pupil. But finally he claimed to have taken his words seriously and given a model reply. This is KD 28, not part of the current letter.

Date etc.: c.1045–7?; cf. excursus 5. See KD 209. The reply is probably KD 27 and/or KD 28.

Moore 393: mss B, O. Weiss 1973, 35 n. 107; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Kazhdan 1993, 97; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 290, 179 n. 358, 304; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Papaioannou 2013, 250 n. 4; Bernard 2017, 24, 25 n. 49.

[KD 27] To Kyritses

The letter accepted that Psellos’ reactions to Kyritses’ letter were changing. He compared his own philosophical writing in some detail to the work of a visual artist, who first sketches out the underdrawing for his picture, then proceeds to complete the perfect final version. Kyritses should not take Psellos’ first reactions to him as a final evaluation: that will be much more positive. But he still found it hard to accept his pupil’s bold words as fit criticism in philosophy. Kyritses’ qualifications in law were higher. In rhetoric, he would show that Kyritses’ choice of Demosthenes as a model was inappropriate.

Date etc.: c.1045–7?; cf. excursus 5 See KD 209. Is this an independent letter? See KD 28.

Moore 484: mss P, L, A. Kazhdan 1993, 97; Limousin 1999, 350 n. 19; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 290, 243; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Papaioannou 2013, 54 n. 11, 118 n. 87, 250 n. 4; Bernard 2017, 24 n. 47, 25.

[KD 28] To Kyritses

This letter largely ignores the substance of Kyritses' letter and concentrates on the techniques of criticism he had used, discussing the skills needed for such work. It focuses on the term 'wasps' nest', examining from many points of view the precise meaning of the pupil's decision to use this word of his teacher at the very beginning of his letter. Links between pupil, teacher, and wasps were explored in a long, bravura performance, with analysis of the nature and legal status of the insult implied, and the possibility (or not) of Psellos' playing at the same time the two roles Kyritses gave him—those of wasp's nest and teacher. One conclusion is that Kyritses had aroused against himself not a wasp's nest but a lion. Another is that if this very unphilosophical word had aroused so much philosophy and rhetoric, it had some justification, though he continues to complain about it.

Date etc.: c.1045–7?; cf. excursus 5. See KD 209. Letters KD 27 and KD 28 are written separately in ms L but as one letter in ms P. The former (as edited by KD) is the more convincing. The seriousness and purpose of the criticisms in this letter are left hard to estimate, maybe deliberately so. Is Psellos still retreating a little, covering embarrassment with humour, from his original violently negative reaction?

Moore 484: mss P, L, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 138; Kazhdan 1993, 97; Ljubarskij 2004, 208; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 290, 243, 324; Papaioannou 2010, 13 n. 36; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Papaioannou 2013, 54 n. 11, 118 n. 87, 250 n. 4; Bernard 2017, 24 n. 47, 25.

**KD 211 TO THE SAKELLARIOS [PROBABLY
CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE
PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS]**

Psellos compared words and icon-painting as depictions of reality, including a view of the relation of an icon to its prototype. The icon discussed (probably a Crucifixion) belongs somehow to his correspondent, Constantine, who enters the comparison in various other ways. If Psellos tried to describe Constantine's fine qualities, his words would be unable to give real expression to his opinions. The same would be true in describing Constantine's icon. The verbal description must fall short of its model, the only standard for judging representations. But the painted icon in no way differs from its model. He tested this by touching an icon of the dead Christ as if it were Christ's body, and feeling a complex mixture of live representation of head, wound, and blood—an animate death. Words could not compete, nor achieve such a sharing in Christ's death and the demise of his soul. Once innovation is involved, how can what happens often be successful? If the icon is made by art, by mixing colours, perhaps its very essence fails the test. As an imitation of nature, how

could it show what was above nature? The mind is aghast at this, sending words into a spin from which it is hard to recover. Constantine must be the measure of Psellos' words and his own model. He should not be surprised if Psellos was found wanting, despite his superiority in other respects: the case was quite different, as words no longer dominated. Psellos showed this difference by carefully phrased comparisons, finally praising Constantine again, as the first after the emperor (which?) to hear these thoughts. He wrote them down for added certainty. Constantine was dearer to him than any jewel, fabric, or joy.

Date etc.: c.1057 (excursus 10). Constantine may have become sakellarios in 1057. Might his 'ownership' of the icon mean that he is still resident in the patriarchate?

Moore 523: mss O, U, A. Cutler and Browning 1992, 22–4 (English translation of a substantial proportion of the letter); Fisher 1994, 50–1 nn. 37–40; Grünbart 2005, 278, 324; Barber 2006, 120 n. 13, 125 n. 21; Jeffreys 2017, 74 and n. 43.

KD 212 TO CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE
PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS, OR THE KAISAR
IOANNES DOUKAS (OR BOTH)

Psellos announced to Constantine (or Ioannes, or both) the arrival of a monk [Elias (Krystoulas)]. He had an ideal balance in life between the Muses (serious) and the Graces (pleasurable), an unusual and effective combination. He could switch between the two at will, say from a bishop to a theatrical character. He was a good musician (both serious and popular) and could play different tragic and comic roles—a Protean range. Having just copied something for Psellos quickly in a good hand, he might play music, then put on various costumes and assume different characters, reflecting the many moods of daily life. He also had the skills of a servant: as well as writing he would bathe you, make your bed, and tend your horses, all to a high standard. The letter announced the imminent arrival of this man, whose attitudes would change at his host's will. His correspondent(s) should enjoy all his variety. Elias was listening (Psellos said) as he dictated, so that would explain why the letter's expression was rather imaginative and indirect.

Date etc.: nw c.1065–8 (excursus 4, excursus 6). On the second occasion in ms B, Elias is given the surname Krysto(u)las, which may be correct. The double attribution in the same manuscript might mean that similar letters were sent to both recipients.

Moore 192: ms B (twice). Weiss 1973, 124 n. 423 (partial German translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 74 n. 48, 77; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 93; Volk 1990, 224 n. 17; Dennis 2003, 57–8 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2003a, 357 n. 39; Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20 n. 63, 121–2; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2006a, 108 n. 38; Jenkins 2006, 145; Kaldellis 2007, 205 n. 50; Papaioannou 2013, 238 n. 9; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43.

KD 213 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

To a request Ioannes *kaisar* had made of him [its nature and much of Psellos' reply are obscured by lacunas], Psellos replied that he was too old. He was like Daidalos towards the end of his life, no longer cutting his own stone, though still carving it. He also needed to change his music to a more solemn tone. He made a division based on Aesop between lions and apes. Ioannes was a lion and honey-eater, living in Jericho and on the way to heaven, while Psellos was a huge ape devoid of honey—though he did not much envy Ioannes' bountiful honey: too great a consumption of honey could have distressing results. However Psellos disturbed lands and cities verbally, with the trumpet of rhetoric. His expertise in rhetoric made it easy to turn wormwood to honey and back again.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 6).

Moore 329: ms B. Dakouros 1977, 43 n. 3; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 291 n. 1304; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 112 n. 26; Papaioannou 2013, 188 n. 79.

KD 214 To Constantine, nephew of the patriarch Keroularios [see G 21 and following letter]

KD 215 TO ISAAKIOS I KOMNENOS

Psellos wrote to Isaakios I, giving extremely joyful thanks for a reply he had been sent to a previous letter of his, after others had brought no response and he had no direct access. The letter said that the emperor had been too busy to write. Psellos had wondered whether he was out of favour, though he had done nothing to provoke it, as God and Isaakios knew. Psellos pictured himself weeping for joy as he received the honeyed letter. It said that he, the stinking dog [Psalms], was beloved of the divine emperor, who wanted to hear his delightful words and intelligent thoughts. This was immeasurable condescension! What fitting encomium could he make in reply, fortunate as he was to receive the letter but unfortunate in having no sufficient speech with which to respond. He would not only keep the letter near his heart (as Isaakios suggested), but would deposit it in his tomb. He hoped the emperor's unexpected favour would continue till his death and be transferred to his descendants. He prayed that Isaakios would live for ever.

Date etc.: 1057–9.

Moore 499: mss Y, B. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 499–500, ep. 1 (Greek text); Weiss 1973, 96 n. 304; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 9, 143 n. 54, 144 n. 72, 242, 256; Jeffreys 2010, 81; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85; Limousin 2014, 164.

KD 216 TO A FRIEND

Psellos warned a friend that their friendship was at crisis point. If Psellos had been unwilling to listen or react to his friend's wishes, if he had been unapproachable and tough, it would have been right to cut him off. But as he followed his friend's wishes to the point of enslavement, why had he not been well treated? Did he too not need his friend's kind words and actions? If he held out a hand, Psellos would welcome it, if he promised a gift, Psellos would leap up and rush to his home. But if he withheld such things, he should expect public revilement. His friend should not force the breaking of their mutual bond, making them weak and helpless in matters of *philia*, trampled like grapes. Swift action was needed. Refusal would lead to merciless taunts from Psellos.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 114: mss B, Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 500–1, ep. 2 (Greek text); Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15; Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 180.

KD 217 TO A FRIEND

The letter is mainly a flowery greeting to an anonymous friend and expression of best wishes, the frame for a recommendation to him for the letter-carrier, a servant. His friend should help the man in the expected ways, if he needed it (and he surely would).

Date etc.: undated. There is no reason why this friend should be Ioannes Mauropous, as in the edition.

Moore 63: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 501, ep. 3 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 14; Volk 1990, 6 n. 7; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7; Grünbart 2005, 160 nn. 203–4, 201 n. 22, 217, 246, 285, 358; Lauxtermann 2017, 102 n. 37.

KD 218 [TO POTHOS (?)]

Psellos wrote to Pothos (?), asking for a sympathetic hearing for a friend and neighbour (the letter-carrier), who was a good man, undemanding and very grateful even for small favours. If it was Pothos' policy to honour Psellos' friends, he should take the man under his wing and help him if he asked for something.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The letter-carrier may not be recommended for employment, leaving the late dating weakly supported. The greeting of the letter would be appropriate for Pothos, but not only him. An uncertain recipient.

Moore 231: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 501, ep. 4 (Greek text); Duyé 1972, 170 n. 20; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 318, 225; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71.

KD 219 UNADDRESSED

Even before his friend wrote, his faithful attitude to Psellos was clear and no more information was required. But his tongue, like a pure stream, indicated the quality of its source. Psellos had the same stance towards his friend, loving him with all his heart (as the other knew), and using speech at appropriate moments to praise him. If this was such a time [the letter breaks off].

Date etc.: undated. A fragmentary letter, only the beginning surviving.

Moore 213: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 502, ep. 5 (Greek text).

KD 220 TO POTHOS, *MAGISTROS*, SON OF THE
DROUNGAREA, *KRITES* OF MACEDONIA

Psellos wrote to Pothos asking for help for Kakoprates. The latter's name suggested he was of bad character, which was wrong, but also that he had suffered bad luck, which was correct. However Pothos could make up the deficiency in fortune. Pothos had asked a question on ideas which, Psellos implied, had an ambiguous answer like Kakoprates' name. He compared the Christian concept of the ideas with that of the pagans, which made some ideas exist even before the creator: he expressed a strong preference for the Christian view, which sometimes linked them to angels. Pothos should become an idea for Kakoprates, a source of great good. Psellos ended with serious advice for Pothos about developing his character and his career. He should dignify his noble family with a range of virtues in word and deed, behaving with restraint, and show respect to his legal vocation with other appropriate virtues. He should adhere precisely to the laws, but return from time to time to more general concepts and practice philosophy.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursuses 5 and 16.1). Pothos is generally dated in the 1060s, here confirmed by the judicial advice he is given.

Moore 285: mss U, Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 505–6, ep. 6 (Greek text); Duyé 1972, 170 n. 20; Dakouros 1977, 143 n. 4; Tatakis 1977, 198 n. 319; Ljubarskij 1978, 103; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 101; Tatakis 2003, 167 nn. 325–6; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 281 n. 1273; Ljubarskij 2004, 157; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 318, 225; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 38, 124 n. 84; Papaioannou 2013, 78 n. 85; Bernard 2015, 192 n. 102; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71; FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 221 [TO A *KRITES*]

The *krites* had asked Psellos to pass on to him requests received, all to be fulfilled without hesitation: Psellos hoped he would keep his word over a problem faced by the learned metropolitan of Euchaita [Ioannes Mauropous].

Mauropous wanted help over a legal aspect of the measurement of the properties of the Python monastery, which he had acquired for a relative of his. The *krites* should know that Python's estates when he took it over were much less in quality and quantity than they now were. He had improved them with acquisitions and building projects. If this investment was taken into account, Mauropous would probably make no loss; but first appearances were against him. If the *krites* judged with scrupulous accuracy over the measurement of the land, he would win Mauropous' and Psellos' enthusiastic gratitude and God's recompense.

Date etc.: Nw c.1050–69 (excursus 16), after Mauropous left for Euchaita, but there is no further dating criterion. Note that Psellos in KD 105 accuses Mauropous of only pretending to be interested in details of agriculture. This letter suggests a more genuine interest.

Moore 435: mss L, Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 506–7, ep. 8 (Greek text); Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Karpozilos 1982, 44 n. 138; Karpozilos 1990, 206; Kazhdan 1993, 101; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 88; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 124; Chondridou 2002, 359 n. 227; Grünbart 2005, 176 n. 335, 261; Jeffreys 2017a, 56; Lauxtermann 2017, 99 n. 30.

KD 222 [TO A LAY OFFICIAL]

He had read the decree often (Psellos told his correspondent, who had presumably drafted it), to understand it completely and to enjoy the delightful and varied harmony of its periods. Its excellent rhetorical form was just right. As for the content, it was inevitably imperfect: it seemed very threatening before the event, so that even Psellos felt nervous; but it came down less hard than expected, so that those who were punished survived while those left unpunished were not left scot-free. His correspondent would undoubtedly produce wonders, more in the manner of Demosthenes . . . [the last sentence as edited is hard to understand and may be inadequate syntactically].

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 23: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 507, ep. 9 (Greek text).

KD 223 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to a friend who endured great, unexpected problems, which must have needed single-minded attention. Yet when he read his beautiful letters, he thought he must have devoted himself to these without distractions. In fact two factors were preventing his friend enjoying literature: philosophy and concern for events, one intellectual, the other practical. His wisdom was unique, sometimes mixing rhetoric and philosophy, sometimes keeping them distinct, all this during troubles which were sometimes critically demanding. How did he mix

tears with beautiful words? In fact this opposition prevented readers from getting to know him and having real sympathy. It was like a public competition in display as in a *theatron*, blunting feelings of pity. As for Psellos, his fortunes were in decline. He was dealing with this philosophically and scientifically. Whenever he looked theoretically at current issues, his attitude became more philosophical and left him inactive. But when he entered the hurly-burly of events he was washed in all directions by the waves of life. His friend should stay high above forces pulling him down, without forgetting nature, where things beyond mind have their source and are embedded in the diverse, disturbed nature of matter. We may only escape upwards towards the mind by facing suffering in this life. Psellos would continue professing philosophy, giving him a calm approach; when vexed by nature, he would be much less kindly in the future.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 318: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 507–9, ep. 10 (Greek text); Tatakis 1977, 176 n. 198; Tatakis 2003, 145 n. 204; Sarres 2005, 96 n. 224, 97, 125 n. 66, 177 n. 31, 279 n. 59, 293 n. 101, 310 n. 151; Jenkins 2006, 133 n. 6; Papaioannou 2012, 183 n. 41; Papaioannou 2013, 22, 160 n. 90; Bernard 2014, 98 n. 105.

KD 224 TO ARISTENOS

Psellos wrote to Aristenos about his son. The letters of his father, an old friend, were not the only reason why Psellos looked after the hard-working boy. Even so, he should continue writing, by his concern keeping up Psellos' interest in his son, which otherwise might waver. Young Aristenos, doubtful of Psellos' teaching, went off to spoon-feeders, where he (like many others) spent most of his time at simple levels, thinking they were proficient, but not really knowing what proficiency meant. Psellos complained that his lessons, based on Plato (and Aristotle), were regarded as old-fashioned. His students would not hear a word said against Hermogenes, and wanted to drag him unwillingly in that direction. But he would not change his ways, however much he was mocked.

Date etc.: maybe c.1054–60 (excursus 5). The Aristenos *protoasekretis* to whom other letters of Psellos are sent is probably the son here.

Moore 253: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 509–10, ep. 11 (Greek text); Zervos 1919, 98 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378; Lemerle 1977, 218; Tatakis 1977, 160 n. 110, 162 n. 122; Ljubarskij 1978, 61, 146, 147; Limousin 1999, 349 n. 15; Tatakis 2003, 130 n. 115, 132 n. 127; Ljubarskij 2004, 100–1, 218, 220; Grünbart 2005, 218; Papaioannou 2014, 182 n. 40; Papaioannou 2013, 43 n. 56, 108; Bernard 2017, 26 n. 53, 32.

KD 225 TO A METROPOLITAN

Psellos was anxious to contact a metropolitan to begin a correspondence in *philia*, when coincidentally the man wrote to him, prey calling the hunter.

He replied, welcoming the contact. Plainly each had been impressed by the reputation of the other, in his case, because of the chair of philosophy. In fact the metropolitan, as the more skilled hunter, had probably caught Psellos in hiding and was now detaining him with bonds of the mind, for a philosopher would not use physical restraints. Psellos discussed the nature of *philia*, weighing its intellectual and physical elements. Contact at the human level led to a philosophical link, but *philia* could not just be a bodily issue, just as the visible symbols of an archbishopric had an invisible reference to God. The metropolitan had mentioned that they had a relationship by blood. In fact it was their kindred learning which made them both want friendship and correspondence, an equal exchange.

Date etc.: after 1047, since Psellos holds the philosophical chair, but maybe not long after, as he accepts equality in learning. The correspondent is not Mauropous, despite Kazhdan's speculation. Though there was no 'university', it must be remembered that here and in M 12 Psellos claims to hold a 'chair'.

Moore 207: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 510–11, ep. 12 (Greek text); Kazhdan 1993, 99–100; Grünbart 2005, 357; Lauxtermann 2017, 117.

KD 226 [TO A SPIRITUAL FATHER]

Psellos wrote to a man he considered his spiritual father about another of the man's spiritual sons, therefore Psellos' brother, with whom he quarrelled. Why did two spiritual sons of the same father not agree, despite their common descent? Psellos made requests, but his brother refused them. It was the brother who should reply to the letter, not the father, who had agreed to the request. The latter, being an excellent speaker, could give an eloquent rhetorical defence in the brother's persona. Psellos preferred improvised speeches of defence and mistrusted rhetorical constructions, since they were often used to dress up unsound arguments.

Date etc.: probably before 1054, as he accepts the other's supremacy. In 1054 Psellos' spiritual allegiances must have changed.

Moore 10: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 511–12, ep. 13 (Greek text); Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Grünbart 2005, 295.

KD 227 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos and his friends tried to help the monastery of the excellent Moses (the best of many acquaintances of Psellos in the theme of the *krites*). The *krites*, being one of Psellos' chief friends, should watch over the monastery in every way in Psellos' place, confirming and increasing its advantages, and warding off any problems, becoming the monks' saviour. They merely wanted

documentary confirmation of their regular rights. The *krites'* ear, gained by Psellos, should win safety for them and for Moses.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The only dating criterion is use of the network.

Moore 395: mss L, Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 512, ep. 14 (Greek text); Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 518; Gautier 1975, 329; Karpozilos 1990, 243; Riedinger 2010, 18–19 (French translation); Jeffreys 2017a, 56.

KD 228 TO XIPHILINOS (?)

Psellos wrote to a close friend and equal [perhaps Ioannes Xiphilinos] about a severe illness that afflicted him so suddenly that he had been unable to summon his friends. The sickness began with sudden cold at the heart, then spread from there everywhere, especially the head. He had tried to preserve philosophical detachment, as his friend would wish, but they had not yet studied death, and he felt unready to free himself from this world. Now pain had stopped, but fever and exhaustion continued, to the alarm of observers; he still ate only under compulsion and with an unnatural feeling; but was now on the side of the living. He did not want to die anywhere else than his beloved Horaia Pege. His correspondent could visit him whenever he wished.

Date etc.: c.1055–6, after Psellos left Horaia Pege. The sickness may be the same as that of KD 177 and S 49. Xiphilinos was on Olympos at Horaia Pege at the right time: but Psellos made the acquaintance of others while there. The addressee cannot have been Mauropous, as conjectured in the edition.

Moore 197: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 512–13, ep. 15 (Greek text); Ahrweiler 1967, 26; Weiss 1973, 149 n. 517; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Gautier 1975, 329; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 14; Volk 1990, 6 n. 7, 44, 201 n. 11, 443 n. 1, 444; Schminck 2001, 196 nn. 46, 48; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7; Grünbart 2005, 81 n. 23, 160 n. 203, 207, 217; Mottana 2005, 233 n. 11; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 10; Jeffreys 2017a, 46 n. 24; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

KD 229 TO IOANNES MAUROPOUS

Ioannes Mauropous had written Psellos a grim letter, replying literally to his usual ironic way of addressing his friends, showing their lack of mutual understanding. Psellos replied, wondering which of them was to blame—perhaps both. Yet Mauropous, as one of the greatest of philosophers, had once been able to combine a wider range of opposite attitudes, from smiles to frowns, than anyone else Psellos had met. Now, despite his close knowledge of Psellos, he was unwilling to match his mood. Why was he now so unhappy, when his current adversity would be brief and succeeded by long good fortune? The emperor had been speaking about him with great admiration

and was about to recall him with great affection. But he expected Mauropous to come back a greater man for his experience. Psellos feared he would return to the capital frowning, complaining, and threatening to leave again, so spoiling everything. He must show some pleasure. Psellos wanted to coach his actor before he reached the emperor's stage, in case he arrived unrehearsed. Mauropous could behave as he wished to Psellos, but his attitude before the emperor was crucial. His approach and address should be agreeable.

Date etc.: 1047–9. This refers to a moment when Mauropous fell under imperial displeasure but was restored to favour, before his episcopal consecration. This may be the time when he lost his house: see his poems (eds. Bollig-Lagarde), 47–8.

Moore 344: mss U, Y, A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 513–15, ep. 16 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 47, 48; Karpozilos 1982, 38 n. 96, 39 n. 101, 45 n. 142, 113 n. 13; Karpozilos 1990, 23 n. 73, 23–4 nn. 77–9; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 96; De Vries-van der Velden 1996, 252–3 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 81, 82; Papaioannou 2013, 149 n. 66, 160 n. 90; Bernard 2015, 188 n. 71; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 106, 107; Lauxtermann 2017a, 7–8; FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 230 TO A METROPOLITAN (?)

Psellos wrote that he would not have read the metropolitan's letter if he had known its contents, which were most unwelcome. He had read it because his mind was elsewhere. Why did he make Psellos responsible for all the problems arising in a situation [maybe errant students], when Psellos had given him complete power to control it as he wished? He called Psellos supremely just, while treating him as if he believed the opposite. Psellos had made the men who were sent subject in all respects to the metropolitan's decisions. The latter's praise of Psellos was completely hypocritical. He was ignoring the importance of philosophy and learning, and ridiculing proclamations about justice by acting unjustly himself: in that case he should not consult Psellos. If the metropolitan had a conscience, he should punish the guilty, but exonerate the teacher. We do not blame Christ for Judas, but the latter's refusal to follow Christ's teaching. If the metropolitan followed the agreed course, Psellos would shake his hand and remain his associate; if not, he was determined to abuse him and call him not an accuser but a slanderer.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 68: ms Y. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1908, 515–16, ep. 17 (Greek text); Grünbart 2005, 307, 339; Bernard 2017, 27 n. 56.

KD 231 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote that winning praise for his works from Ioannes *kaisar* made him feel truly wise. Musicians and athletes did not benefit from their skills without

an appreciative audience. Ioannes made him a better speaker by careful listening. He claimed to be catholic in philosophy, praising not only intellectuals like Ioannes but lovers of the visual arts and jewellery. Lovers of literature usually liked other beautiful things like music, while those with no intellectual skill were also unappreciative of other kinds of beauty. The soul must relate to spiritual beauty in a bodily way, but it could only see traces in the material world, not its immaterial form. Those with a philosophical bent, like Ioannes, particularly liked beautiful words. Ioannes, who was greater than many past rulers, deserved better praise than that of Psellos, who was far inferior to past philosophers. However Psellos was lucky that Ioannes enjoyed his inferiority more than the ancients liked their wiser men. Ancient rulers, though they loved their philosophers at first, later despised them (a list given), in some cases because of their work's lack of verbal beauty. But Ioannes would continue to esteem Psellos for his fine encomia.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 266: mss P, M, E, e, a¹, m². Tafel 1832, 351, ep. 48 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1317–18, ep. 48 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 71, 73; Maltese 1988, 29 no. 13; Volk 1990, 133 n. 18; Ljubarskij 2004, 115, 118; Grünbart 2005, 277, 302; Mottana 2005, 238; Jenkins 2006, 149 n. 54; Papaioannou 2013, 239 n. 16; Bernard 2014, 176 n. 74, 246 n. 110.

KD 232 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Ioannes *kaisar* had given Psellos a horse. The recipient of the gift was (he said) completely at a loss how to respond, unable to produce a letter of equivalent dimensions to this magnificent, beautiful animal, being used to gifts of produce and spices. The horse was as pre-eminent among his kind as Ioannes *kaisar* himself. Alexander's Boukephalos and the mythical Pegasus paled in comparison, especially as they were rather wild and belonged in ancient times while Psellos' horse had the great advantages of being vigorously alive and well trained. Ioannes also had other virtues. Psellos described a recent conversation about hunting cranes when dining with Ioannes' two sons [Constantine and Andronikos]: they told him of a hunt, in which their father had with great difficulty killed a heroic bird, then pronounced a kind of funeral eulogy to it in full armour—a good picture of Ioannes' delightful character. He was also a great rider. Psellos, by contrast, feared horses as most people were afraid of elephants, and he was often thrown, especially now he was ill. But for all that, he would boldly ride Ioannes' gift because of the identity of the donor.

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6).

Moore 403: ms P. Tafel 1832, 352, ep. 49 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1318–20, ep. 49 (Greek text, Latin translation); Kassel 1977, 69 no. 225; Ljubarskij 1978, 73; Karpozilos 1984, 27 n. 96; Ljubarskij 2004, 117; Grünbart 2005, 277, 346; Bernard 2011, 147–8; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 233 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to Ioannes about truffles. The truffle had to be brought to birth in a destructive way, almost by abortion. When the earth's womb was seen to be swollen, its innards were torn open and the foetus removed. It was an example of something externally hideous that concealed great sweetness within it, a kind of consolation for its ugliness. It was like the numerous ancient Greeks who were not handsome (list given). Others who were externally handsome had internal faults. Ioannes was lucky, being an intelligent mind in a heroic body. Psellos had been distressed, hardly breathing, needing consolation by thoughts of Ioannes: his adopted daughter [Euphemia] seemed to be breathing her last, but was now revived by Ioannes' gift. The truffle's ugliness reminded him of the fox in Aesop's fable who compared herself to a leopard. To increase Psellos' affection for him, Ioannes should be sparing of his visits, unlike Hera in the Iliad, who by over-satisfying Zeus provoked his insults, not his love. It was time for a change from truffles, which for Ioannes meant peacocks and sucking lambs, and for Psellos milk, cheese, butter, and eggs. And did Ioannes not come from Paphlagonia, where they made salt pork? Had he not thought of that?

Date etc.: c.1061–2 (excursus 6). KD (contra ms P which alone provides the full text) edit Moore 124 and 482 as one letter. May mention of the birth of truffles hint that Euphemia was suffering in childbirth (or miscarriage?).

Moore 128, 482: mss P, L, v². Tafel 1832, 353, epp. 50–1 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1320–1, epp. 50–1 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 72; Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 32; Volk 1990, 24 n. 85, 271–4; Ljubarskij 2004, 115; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2006, 171–2 (English translation); Chernoglazov 2011, 65–6; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38; Bernard 2015, 189 n. 83.

KD 234 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

Psellos sent some early figs. This fruit was not like a girl who rushes ahead, leaving the more serious to follow, but one who leads and guides the others in the path of life. So it was not only the best fruit, but also the most delightful, not with excessive sweetness, nor unpleasant bitterness or sharpness on the tongue. Its tartness automatically regulated overeating. But careless picking could be painful, as with a rose. Careless eating could hurt the teeth and bloody the gums. It was first to arrive of all fruits, capturing the spring sunshine as soon as it appeared. Without sun, the tree produced only leaves. Unlike other fruit-trees which either hid their fruit or showed it at once, this offered food in both ways: as time passed the visible fruit became inedible, but the hidden slowly fattened up till it was good to eat. You might use it as solid food and for moisture too: for it had secret springs of milk, so that doctors classed it as both food and drink.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 447: ms P, L, V, v⁴. Tafel 1832, 351, ep. 52 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1321–2, ep. 52 (Greek text, Latin translation); Volk 1990, 275–9; Chernoglazov 2011 (German summary), 62–3; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 235 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

Psellos assured Ioannes that what he sent was a hazelnut too, like the regular nut in other ways, only smaller. Though it looked similar, it belonged to another species: the other was circular inside and out, while this had a shell like a mouse-hole, and the nut was like a runaway hiding inside. It was amusing to see how the fugitive entered its cave to avoid pursuers, completely hiding itself like a squid squirting ink to escape the hunter. It was caught once seen, like a bulb betrayed by a shoot. It only left its castle when someone attacked: then it slid out, wanting to escape. But it was wrong to impute life to the inanimate. It did not run away, but emerged from the start with its covering of shell. Nature does not swaddle all her children, but treats them in different ways, leaving some naked but with internal bracing. We should think of her motives, for intellectual pleasure.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 226: ms P. Tafel 1832, 354, ep. 53 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1322, ep. 53 (Greek text, Latin translation); Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 28; Volk 1990, 277; Grünbart 2005, 280; Chernoglazov 2011, 63 n. 17; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 236 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

His correspondent, Psellos said, might find the thin coverings of chestnuts annoying, especially the inner one, which held the nut tightly, following its contours. When Psellos picked them, he held them lightly like roses, watching out for thorns. Was it because nature knew it was a firm fruit that it made the nut safe and very hard to attack? Or (a more humorous thought) was it because it largely grew in mountain woodland and would probably be harvested by gnarled hands that nature, in creating it, made it thorny? Shepherds and farmers with calloused hands hardly notice the thorns. The inner skin does not cover every nut, but in those that do not ripen on the tree the thorny covering has not split. As for the shape of the coverings—one a complete sphere (without the thorns), the other a hemisphere—Psellos in his upbeat way likened them to the universe, where the heavens are spherical but the elements do not make up exactly the same shape. This is its secret, to be remembered. The real nut should be eaten.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 420: ms P. Tafel 1832, 354, ep. 54 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1322–3, ep. 54 (Greek text, Latin translation); Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 29; Chernoglazov 2011, 63 n. 17; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 237 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

It was pointless sending a letter with a melon. It was self-sufficient, needing no prose or verse, though Homer used the word as an insult. But if species of fruit were submitted to Psellos' judgement, he would undoubtedly give the prize to the melon. It was like a head, unchanging in shape but with many differences in appearance. It had things in common with cube, pyramid, and sphere. What else could one say? It was full of delight and pleasure, not firm like an apple nor completely soft and shapeless. It was easy to chew, so useful to the elderly. It was delightful in itself and in the throat, like nectar and ambrosia for mortals. You could not compare the pleasure it gives to any seasonal fruit, for it combined the delights of all seasons and elements. It was dirt cheap, two drachmas for ten full baskets, plentiful like air, fire, or sea. The most cautious man would not hesitate to declare it the first of fruits.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 238: ms P. Tafel 1832, 354–5, ep. 55 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1323, ep. 55 (Greek text, Latin translation); Karpozilos 1984, 22 n. 16; Chernoglazov 2011, 63 n. 17; Papaioannou 2013, 194 n. 9; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 238 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

A letter and a bunch of grapes, Psellos wrote, were like each other. The comparison was interesting, though not obvious. The grape was incomparably the sweetest of fruits before processing, and more drinkable still when pressed into wine. Wise discourse was also naturally double, whether immediate and oral, or after examination of its inner structure. If you compared the spoken word to grapes before pressing, and the wine produced to words properly analysed, then the analogy was in every way more accurate. Some grapes were golden, but others white, black, or more complex in colour; discourse too was not simple. Sometimes it was nearly white, with gospel purity, sometimes pitch black, marked by the shadow of the ancients, sometimes complex and mixed. Thus it was not right to send a letter alone without grapes, nor just grapes on their own.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 146: ms P. Tafel 1832, 355, ep. 56 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1323–4, ep. 56 (Greek text, Latin translation); Karpozilos 1984, 22 n. 23; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 239 [TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS?]

Psellos decided to honour this fruit with a text, like the others: he did not send it on its own, but with this letter. This was enough for Archigenes to condemn nature, railing against her for making most things without reason. ‘Why,’ he would say, ‘did nature not give this simple fruit external protection, exposing it to all and sundry, while she armed the nut with many defences, although it was perfectly sound without them?’ ‘Archigenes,’ Psellos would reply, ‘two kinds of protection for fruit have been devised by nature, one internal, the other external. Products she has swaddled with external protection she leaves bare internally, and vice versa. Stones are like secret mechanisms supporting and holding together the flesh of the fruit. Those which, so to say, have protection at the heart need no tunic.’ This species too shares this excellent principle. So a student of the works of nature, when giving this fruit to a friend, should send it with a letter. When you eat it, hold the stone in your hand and remember that this was the fruit’s guardian, better than those provided for his city by Plato.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 176: ms P. Tafel 1832, 355, ep. 57 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1324, ep. 57 (Greek text, Latin translation); Chernoglazov 2011, 63 n. 17; Limousin 2014, 170 n. 38.

KD 240 [TO A KRITES]

This letter is a puzzle. There are two persons involved as well as Psellos, probably both *kritai*. It is addressed to the younger, with the elder as its main subject. The elder is attacked for ignorance of processes involving Bulgarian and nomad orphans, which put vulnerable people at his mercy. His family (Psellos said) was descended from those who envied the life of the ancients [puzzling syntax]. He congratulated the younger on succeeding the elder, who succeeded everyone else, and for reconciling the elder to himself, like the moon affecting the elements, the sun lighting the moon, the firmament letting the sun revolve and its outer region wrapping up the universe. The younger *krites* made the elder change his character from bitter to very sweet, abandoning previous threats and unfriendliness. But the younger differed from the elder (who drank like a fish) as he hated wine. Psellos told his correspondent to rejoice if the elder changed and offered him a gift by his own custom. He should not refuse a glass (even a pitcher). The man would present him with the sustenance on which he fed himself.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The only dating criterion is use of the network.

Moore 227: ms P. Tafel 1832, 355–6, ep. 58 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1324–5, ep. 58 (Greek text, Latin translation).

KD 241 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos recommended a bishop to a lay official, perhaps a *krites*. He had an archbishop's solemnity but an urbane, sweet manner, not artificial or comic, but quite natural. If the *krites* wanted solemnity, he would find it in the bishop; if charm and humour, he had plenty; if both attributes together, he could manage that too. Either for distinct traits or a mixture, he should honour him. He could also just make him a friend because of Psellos; whatever the man was like, he should be welcomed with respect because of this letter.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). It is unclear why a bishop should need Psellos' introduction.

Moore 273: ms P, Tafel 1832, 356, ep. 59 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1325, ep. 59 (Greek text, Latin translation); Limousin 1999, 349 n. 17.

KD 242 TO SAGMATAS, *PROTONOTARIOS*
OF THE DROMOS

Sagmatas was a hunter, Psellos wrote, giving a long list of hunting terms and actions to reflect his world, ending in a splendid feast. Psellos had opposite interests, far from hunting, sitting at home or standing somewhere else, most often bent over his desk and writing. Neither had any share in the other's world. Psellos seemed affected by a new kind of moral code that praised various enjoyable activities (eating, drinking, walking in the country, the theatre, hunting) without allowing participation in them. This code would eventually ban the breathing of air. He claimed he firmly rejected such a code, especially as it might apply to philosophical concepts. But he did not believe in hunting either, as it was the murderous and brutal taking of life, as well as being cold, muddy, and full of meaningless shouts. On the other hand, reason was much preferable: his philosophy was beloved of God, a light discipline of freedom high above the crowd, safe from public pressures and the terrors of the palace. It freed the soul from the body. Sagmatas and Psellos both loved the present—a bird caught on the wing or a thought seized by a lofty mind. Why not make an exchange, Sagmatas' game for Psellos' letters?

Date etc.: probably after 1060 (excursus 15.1). The exchange of letters for objects of more tangible value is an idea Psellos generally explored after 1060. In one ms Sagmatas has the additional title of *synkellos*.

Moore 505: ms P, L, Tafel 1832, 356, ep. 60 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1325–6, ep. 60 (Greek text, Latin translation); Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Walker 2004, 68 n. 41, 71 n. 51; Grünbart 2005, 220; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 10; Bernard 2015, 192 n. 103.

KD 243 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos recommended to the *krites* a son of the famous Michael Choiosphaktes. The man was well-mannered and educated, but had not yet made a good career. Seeing fortune was against him, he reduced expenses and lived in poverty on the tiny income of his estate at Pythia. But bad luck dogged him in the country as in the city. The managers of his estate faced a most violent neighbour, an unknown farmer yet a second Herakles in strength and ferocity. He insulted one of Choiosphaktes' men and horse-whipped another, then inflicted grievous bodily harm on the elderly man who had brought him up. They say that under this terrible assault the old man died. Choiosphaktes, in bitter mourning, went to Psellos, requesting that he ask the *krites* to punish the criminal for what he had suffered. This Psellos was now doing. The *krites* was both judge and friend: as a judge he would uphold the laws for the injured party, and as a friend would make a speedy decision.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Detailed judicial information suggests a date in the 1060s.

Moore 497: ms P, Y. Tafel 1832, 356–7, ep. 61 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1326, ep. 61 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 62 n. 193; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Ljubarskij 2004, 155, 160; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 291.

KD 244 [TO A *KRITES*]

Psellos asked that his learned correspondent should give everybody a fair hearing. Nobody should gain an unfair advantage, neither Psellos nor anybody else, neither the plaintiffs nor those accused of harming them. Justice should be done. This was a moderate, philosophical demand, suited to the *krites*' character, asking him to behave like Radamanthys. But he hoped he would do so in a good Christian way.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The exhortation to justice is too imprecise to be a dating criterion.

Moore 27: ms P, L. Tafel 1832, 357, ep. 62 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1326–7, ep. 62 (Greek text, Latin translation); Grünbart 2005, 294.

KD 245 TO THE PATRIARCH LEICHOUEDES

Leichoudes sent Psellos a fish. When he saw it he remembered the friend who once embraced him but now rejected him. From this material food that delighted his palate his mind flew to the ambrosia of the patriarch's words

that nourished his soul: but with difficulty, for he had nearly forgotten the picture and the example. This truly desirable fish lived both in rivers and the sea, wonderful as a whole and in every part, and though called a fish like the rest, it was superior to all earthly creatures. If the fish was like this, what could be said of the sender? He too was superior, a master of creation, a spiritual paradise. But Psellos grieved that, having been an insider in that beautiful world, he was now excluded. Again there were poisonous lies and covert attacks, and he was condemned. Yet these complaints were from the past: now all was sunny, a brilliant festival, different from the nightmares. When he saw the fish he rushed unrestrainedly towards Leichoudes. After tasting it he would reach him eagerly, breaking strong barriers of envy and malevolence that were no match for his spiritual enthusiasm, such was his desire for Leichoudes' soul. The dragon still barred his way, but he would strike it down, whatever terrible form it took. Why did secret opponents still denounce him? He was Leichoudes' own, part of his divine plan, though excluded from it. Once he roared at his foes, Leichoudes would know who were lions and who were monkeys.

Date etc.: c. 1059–60. Leichoudes seems, from the vocatives, to be patriarch, but Psellos is trying to return to his favour. This is likely to be just after his appointment—not after the accession of Constantine X.

Moore 24: mss P, U. Tafel 1832, 357, ep. 63 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1327, ep. 63 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 100 n. 322; Anastasi 1974a, 418 n. 82; Ljubarskij 1978, 31 n. 34, 56 n. 23; Ljubarskij 2004, 54 n. 37, 92 n. 31; Grünbart 2005, 185 n. 421, 251, 361.

KD 246 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos wrote that a man complained to him of a novel problem. He claimed that a neighbour was preventing him from repairing his ruined house. He was not stopping him from trying to remodel the ruin, but stopping rebuilding of any kind. Psellos at first laughed, thinking that the problem was a different one, but the man persisted in his original story. This was a novel kind of persecution: but since the persecutor was a poor man, it would be impossible to hold him to account for his crimes on the basis of persecution. As he was insolent and violent, or rather extremely hasty and foolish, he would be punished by appropriate fines. If the case was not as presented, the *krites* should not shoot the messenger but the complainant.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The provision of judicial information suggests the 1060s.

Moore 206: ms P. Tafel 1832, 357–8, ep. 64 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1327–8, ep. 64 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 62 n. 194.

KD 247 [TO A KRITES]

A friend of Psellos had requested him to ask assistance from a *krites* in demanding his few outstanding payments (reading *λοιπαδάρια*). If, having made one demand he was again trying a second, the *krites* should regard Psellos' request as unsuccessful. If those receiving the demands had broken the law in connection with their payment of public monies, how was it just that through their criminality and intransigence Psellos' friend should suffer loss of money he had not received? The *krites* should offer him major assistance and put his judicial powers at his disposal. There is no action so correct for a judge as to help the wronged and prosecute wrongdoers.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The provision of judicial information suggests the 1060s.

Moore 304: ms P. Tafel 1832, 358, ep. 65 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1328, ep. 65 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 61 n. 190; Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 179; Grünbart 2005, 263.

THRAKESIOS, NOTARIOS OF THRAKESION,
AND THE BROTHERS XEROS (2 LETTERS)

In the first letter, Psellos asked a krites or praitor to employ a notarios named Thrakesios in the theme coinciding with his name. In the second, it seems that his application was successful and the man's work satisfactory, for the krites of Thrakesion, who had been transferred, took Thrakesios with him as he left for his new post. But the notarios, who loved Thrakesion, was less positive about this plan, and his family was distraught. Psellos described the situation in his second letter and asked the krites, named now as Xeros, to send him back. These letters are linked by Ljubarskij to S 47, but that deals with a different krites and different notarios.

KD 248 [To the praitor of Thrakesion]

Psellos had sent a poor *notarios* called Thrakesios to do a job for him in Thrakesion. The man, having completed the work, asked to become a subordinate of the *praitor* [*krites*?] of the theme and gain a little benefit. Psellos wrote to the *praitor* to achieve this. He asked him to think of his own high quality as a friend, compare it with the simple and effortless nature of the request, and perform it to the benefit of their *philia*. This *notarios* did not come with a large stud-farm (?) or ambitions for large profits, so he would be only a slight charge on the theme; even that would disappear if the *praitor* looked at him positively through Psellos' *philia*.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). A recommendation for a *notarios* suggests the 1060s.

Moore 298: ms P, L. Tafel 1832, 358, ep. 66 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1328, ep. 66 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 121 n. 407; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1; Limousin 2008, 73, 76 (French translation of two paragraphs).

[KD 254] To the *krites* of Thrakesion

He asked the *krites* to follow the example of his brother (Psellos' spiritual brother), especially over the *notarios* Thrakesios, whose name was that of his theme. Psellos had sent the brother a written request about Thrakesios, and he fulfilled it, making him an intimate advisor. He later wanted to take him to the theme where he was transferred, but Thrakesios loved his theme and wanted to stay there. If the new *krites* wanted to follow his brother's example, he should employ Thrakesios in the same way. If he followed his own example of performing favours out of *philia* for Psellos, he should do the same, receiving him in a kindly way and supporting him, especially over the house he owned. But why go into details? If he recruited the man to his staff, the rest would follow.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). A recommendation for a *notarios* suggests the 1060s. Papaioannou 2012a indicates that the text appears twice in ms. L.

Moore 377: ms P, L. Tafel 1832, 359, ep. 72 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1330, ep. 72 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 121 n. 407; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Ljubarskij 2004, 160; Limousin 2008, 73, 76 (French translation of two paragraphs); Papaioannou 2012a, 312 n. 75.

KD 249 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos had asked a *krites* to help somebody. The man had written to say that the *krites*, for Psellos' sake, had offered him a great deal of excellent aid, saving him from those who wished to harm him. Psellos in his letter expressed fulsome gratitude, and wished to reciprocate. He was not only in the *krites*' debt for these benefits, but for many others, and he promised to repay him without delay. He asked the *krites* to go further in kindness to the man and take up his cause even more warmly. He should do this, so that he should prosper not only in the *krites*' presence but also in his absence.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16). Such concern for dependents, especially when its expression tends towards a virtuous circle, is a mark of the 1060s.

Moore 152: mss P, L. Tafel 1832, 358, ep. 67 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1328–9, ep. 67 (Greek text, Latin translation).

KD 250 TO POTHOS, SON OF THE
DROUNGAREA, MAGISTROS AND KRITES
OF THRACE AND MACEDONIA

Psellos asked Pothos if he had really made an attack on the Acheiropoietos and the Theotokos who had freed mankind and saved nature. He hoped he was not so unphilosophical as to betray his beliefs so far. If the charge was false, Pothos should continue his usual behaviour. If true, he should change his way of thinking and not steal religious property. If he had no reverence for the divine, he should on a more human level turn to chrysobulls, other titles and long-standing custom, respecting previous judges' regard for the monastery. If he was not even interested in these, he should show some consideration for Psellos, his friend and teacher, the owner of the monastery. Psellos and the Theotokos would both reward such a stance.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursus 5). Pothos probably used this matronymic is the second half of the 1060s. For the Acheiropoietos, see p. 53.

Moore 233: mss P, L. Tafel 1832, 358, ep. 68 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1329 ep. 68 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Duyé 1972, 170 n. 20; Weiss 1973, 146 nn. 492 and 495; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 25, 102; Saradi 1995, 192 n. 132; Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 27, 157; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 174 n. 318, 226, 292; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 36, 124 n. 84; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017a, 53.

KD 251 [TO THE KRITES OF OPSIKION?]

The *krites* [maybe Pothos, son of the *droungarios/-a*] was told by Psellos that the people of Mamytze were injuring the Acheiropoietos monastery. The latter owned three mills in Mamytze, near its estate of Strobilos, with enough flow of water to operate all year. The villagers of Mamytze owned one mill, only working in winter. But on the flimsiest of excuses they diverted the water from the three mills to their single mill. The *krites* was asked to think of Psellos [the *charistikarios*], justice and his reverence for the Theotokos. He was urged to restore the water and punish the wrongdoers who diverted it severely enough to act as a deterrent in the future both for them and others.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Judicial information is less clear as a date marker when (as here) it involves Psellos' own monasteries. For the Acheiropoietos, see p. 53. Mamytze was a village in Eastern Thrace (see Külzer 2008).

Moore 284: mss P, L. Tafel 1832, 358, ep. 69 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1329, ep. 69 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ahrweiler 1966, 168 n. 1; Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Weiss 1973, 62 n. 195, 146 n. 492; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 25, 102; Harvey 1989, 131 n. 63; Saradi 1995, 192 n. 132; Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 27, 157; Külzer 2008, 513 n. 1; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 38; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017a, 53.

KD 252 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos had made a request as the *krites* left the capital, and renewed it now in a letter, that a tax official (who carried the letter) be helped in his work and treated as a friend. Psellos had just heard the *krites* was hostile; he was not annoyed, thinking he had punished the man for a minor infringement. This should soon be over and the *krites*' temporary hostility should pass. So far as his expenses were concerned, he wrote, the man could not conform with the official sum, as his income would not equal his rights. The *krites* should not only turn a blind eye to this, but should allow wider freedoms. Only thus could he avoid criticisms often made of judges and be fair to tax officials.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.3). Support of tax officials generally dates a letter after 1060. Note that Psellos is asking the *krites* to bend the rules.

Moore 386: mss P, L, Tafel 1832, 359, ep. 70 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1329–30, ep. 70 (Greek text, Latin translation); Weiss 1973, 58 n. 179; Ljubarskij 1978, 110, 121; Ljubarskij 2004, 167, 182.

KD 253 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos thanked a *krites* for listening to requests he made. He had recently asked him to support and help a relative of his as much as he could. He thought he would gain part of what he wanted, but his relative contradicted him, saying that his very brief letter had been enough to cover his whole tax collection duties. The *krites*' deep, rich soul had received a tiny seed and produced manifold fruit. Psellos was now giving thanks for this success, in a letter longer than the request. The *krites* should offer more recompense for his thanks and become an even more assiduous ally of the tax collector. The latter would report the benefit to Psellos, and he would make it a reason for still more thanks.

Date etc.: nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.3). Help for a subordinate, especially a tax official, support operating as a virtuous circle, dates this letter to the 1060s. The letters S 64, S 111, KD 74, and KD 253 appear consecutively in ms. L: Papaioannou 2012a sees them as referring to the same man. Small but significant differences between the man's descriptions in the four letters make me hesitate to agree.

Moore 162: mss P, L, F, Tafel 1832, 359, ep. 71 (Greek text); Migne 1866, col. 1330, ep. 71 (Greek text, Latin translation); Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 291; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

KD 254 To the *krites* of Thrakesion [see KD 248 and the two following letters]

KD 255 [TO A KRITES]

The letters of a *krites* (Psellos wrote to him) were some consolation for his absence, like a live conversation urging Psellos to praise him before the

emperor's council. He swore that he did this without being asked, though he acknowledged there had been no useful result so far. However a firm basis for improvement had been laid. The emperor commended the *krites*, was more positive over the problems he faced and seemed ready to promote him. Psellos asked if the *krites* wanted a post in the capital or transfer to a better theme, so as to take his preference into account. The best themes had either just changed hands or needed to keep their old *krites* for some time because of problems affecting them. Thus the *krites* should forget them and think of a medium theme.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.4). Psellos lobbied several emperors like this. But his inside knowledge and negotiations with a persuadable but indecisive emperor suggest Constantine X.

Moore 355: mss P, L. Tafel 1832, 359, ep. 73 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1330–1, ep. 73 (Greek text, Latin translation); Duyé 1972, 172 n. 26; Weiss 1973, 40 n. 121; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6, 110; Karpozilos 1982, 36 n. 84; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 292–3 n. 1310; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7, 167; FLORIS BERNARD.

KD 256 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos remembered that his speeches and writings were once important to Ioannes, who admired them, collecting them in volumes, making much of his every word. But now Psellos had lost him (with many others), though his own powers had not completely vanished. Ioannes' affection had cooled, he spoke to him less and left the capital without warning or farewell. The previous good relationship was turning towards its opposite. Ioannes was his most serious loss, and he did not know if they would ever meet, speak, and exchange letters again. The second half of the letter shows an almost pathetic desire to renew friendship. Psellos longed to be admitted again into Ioannes' confidence, to rekindle their *philia*, to send many letters (whatever their reception) and praise Ioannes for his character and intelligence, as before... [It breaks off in a lacuna].

Date etc.: c.1065 (excursus 6).

Moore 178: ms P. Tafel 1832, 360–1, ep. 74 (Greek text); Migne 1866, cols. 1332–4, ep. 74 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 71; Volk 1990, 132 n. 13; Angold 1998, 238 n. 70; Ljubarskij 2004, 66, 114; Grünbart 2005, 141 n. 39; Papaioannou 2012a, 302 n. 43; Papaioannou 2013, 22 n. 59; Bernard 2014, 97 n. 99.

KD 257 [TO A KRITES]

A very poor man was made poorer still by criminals attacking the few possessions he had. A *krites* should improve his state with gifts and rebates. Both were very easy for him. The man needed no lavish treatment, just the

krites' usual help. His debts, he claimed, could be counted in pennies, not pounds.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No dating criteria save use of the network.

Moore 312: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 602, ep. 1 (Greek text); Weiss 1973, 60 n. 188; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 56; Ljubarskij 2004, 168, 174 n. 318; Grünbart 2005, 225; Bernard 2017, 30 n. 71.

KD 258 [TO A KRITES]

A friend of Psellos asked him to support the letter-carrier to a *krites* before whom he was accused of breaking the law. Psellos would do so briefly (despite a vow not to ask favours of this *krites*), and write at greater length in another letter. He asked him to promote fairness by smoothing the man's entry to his court, and thus hopefully his acquittal. This was the point of *philia*. If the man won his case, all would be well; but if his case proved inadequate, the *krites* should find him a means of survival, as it was also a judge's role to ensure that those in his court should not be reduced to abject poverty by losing their case. Thus the man should either win his case or not lose all means of subsistence.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). This letter, and even more the (lost) fuller letter mentioned, provide judicial information and advice characteristic of the 1060s.

Moore 506: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 602–3, ep. 2 (Greek text); Limousin 1999, 361 n. 67, 362 n. 84; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 280 n. 1267; Grünbart 2005, 220.

KD 259 [TO A METROPOLITAN]

A metropolitan refused to maintain correspondence with Psellos. Psellos did not rebuke him, but recalled their past *philia* witnessed by God—communicating through conversation, letters, and friendly greetings. How else could friendship be defined? Conversation was its hallmark while friends were together, letters when apart. But the metropolitan refused to accept this definition, so Psellos should accept defeat and bear it with equanimity. The metropolitan, if he refused to write, should use his memory and imagination, as would Psellos, writing letters too, hoping this would not annoy his friend. If they saw each other as they hoped, they could revive their famous friendship, or maintain it, if it had not lapsed. Psellos had never expected them not to wish to converse by friendly letters, just because they lived close together.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 353: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 603, ep. 3 (Greek text); Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Grünbart 2005, 251.

KD 260 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos rejoiced in his friendship with Ioannes the *kaisar*. Each served as food for the other, and they ate (as it were) regularly, in works, speeches, and memories, forming an undivided and admirable unity which even increased. There had long been an unwritten law that when one sacrificed or kept a festival, first-fruits were sent to [the imperial family?—second-person plural] as their superiors. By this rule he sent Ioannes first-fruits of common foods—bread, wine, and fruit. To do things properly in relation to Psellos, Ioannes should eat them himself. Otherwise he should give them to his sons [Constantine and Andronikos] to play with, and enjoy their games. He signed the letter as Ioannes' worthy (not unworthy) servant.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1). This letter may have been among the first of those accompanying gifts to the imperial family, as it provides some background to this custom. The meaning of 'sacrificed or kept a festival' is obscure. The gift seems to be initiated by the subject, not the ruler; was it therefore based on the ecclesiastical or the individual calendar? Is this a custom for a name-day or the end of a fast?

Moore 58: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 603–4, ep. 4 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 72; Karpozilos 1984, 27 nn. 88 and 91; Ljubarskij 2004, 115; Grünbart 2005, 234, 255, 277, 346.

KD 261 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to ask an anonymous friend, one of those absent on an expedition with the emperor, how he was getting on without him (giving his *hypertimos* title)—he who usually regarded Psellos not just with *philia* but as a necessity of life. Psellos felt deprived of most of his being, missing him and other friends and especially the emperor. He was living with his books, having planted himself in their midst, picking flowers from their meadow, one after another. But his world was lifeless, unlike his friend's, which was alive and intact. There lived the emperor, the tree of life; Psellos' plant was Hellenic wisdom, of doubtful value with its self-contradictions.

Date etc.: nw probably 1968. Psellos is *hypertimos* (excursus 9). The wording is very similar that of G 25, suggesting that this should also be dated during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV.

Moore 3: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 604, ep. 5 (Greek text); Volk 1990, 447–8 n. 19; Grünbart 2005, 220; Jenkins 2006, 149 n. 50; Papaioannou 2013, 11 n. 28.

KD 262 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos asked a friend [probably a *krites*] why he let others report his news, rather than sending letters himself. He should make letters a substitute for direct conversation, which was prevented by their separation. His chief source

of information on his friend was a grateful kinsman working for him, who praised his generosity and kindness in accepting him to play a full and active role in his circle. Psellos thanked him not only for friendship towards himself but also sympathy for his relatives. But since virtue was an unending process to which it was always possible to add, he urged his friend to outdo himself by increasing his generosity, matching his growing *philia* by greater sympathy for Psellos' dependants also, bringing further thanks from Psellos. This seemed to be happening: the *krites*' recent letter did not trumpet the benefit given but informed his friend (Psellos) that his request had been fulfilled.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.1). Concentration on Psellos' kinsman, by a particularly full expression of the virtuous circle, suggests the 1060s.

Moore 62: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 604–5, ep. 6 (Greek text); Grünbart 2005, 291.

KD 263 UNADDRESSED

Psellos sent a fish (a *leukoskaros*) to a senior churchman to inaugurate *philia*. His correspondent should not spurn the gift of a single fish, as it was out of season and very rare even in the capital. *Philia* was a simple thing, and should begin with a simple exchange. Those starting a real friendship should not make spectacular beginnings, which, when completed, might lead to the breaking of the link. The means should be inexpensive and small, so that they could be used easily to prolong the friendship, like regular gestures—a kiss, a greeting, a nod, a happy laugh. The white fish represented the colour of friendship, and was a good symbol: the *skaros* was a very eloquent fish, symbol of their future *philia*.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 258: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 605–6, ep. 7 (Greek text); Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 44–5; Grünbart 2005, 254; Bernard 2015, 184 n. 47.

KD 264 TO DALASSENOS

Dalassenos' friendship was strong and the number of cheeses he sent large; but his letter was short—though it should be longer, to match their friendship. They had talked endlessly in person, so they should want to enjoy further converse by letter. If Dalassenos pleaded ignorance to excuse reducing his letter to a few lines, he should keep the size but write more often. Their *philia* had from the beginning been pure and simple; they should keep it so in person and by letter at a distance. Dalassenos should speak and write in plain, soldierly language, simple letters which Psellos preferred from his friends rather than those in affected styles.

Date etc.: nw c.1059–62 (?). This assumes that this is the Dalassenos of S 78, who helped Lizix before he died.

Moore 203: mss L, H. Creuzer 1823, 606, ep. 8 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 37 n. 2; Ljubarskij 2004, 67 n. 2; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 217, 292.

KD 265 TO XIPHILINOS

Ioannes Xiphilinos made few requests for his nephew, who had become Psellos' pupil and now, for Ioannes' sake, his chief confidant. He seemed not unlike Ioannes, with a firm and broad intelligence, his character not hard-edged but even and completely consistent. To use the shapes they once enjoyed, he was far from a cone, but a perfect cylinder. What did this long introduction imply? He wanted Ioannes to write to him with thanks or requests for additions.

Date etc.: probably before 1052. The letter seems addressed by a layman to a lay colleague.

Moore 357: mss U, H. Creuzer 1823, 607, ep. 10 (Greek text); Drexl 1941, 310; Lemerle 1977, 198 n. 5; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6, 49; Karpozilos 1982, 25 n. 17, 113 n. 14; Karpozilos 1990, 10 n. 12, 253; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7, 84; Grünbart 2005, 119 n. 337, 263; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 316 n. 26; Bernard 2017, 26; Lauxtermann 2017, 102 nn. 37 and 39.

KD 266 UNADDRESSED

He had censured the father of a pupil for bringing him letters every few hours, but the last one made more pleasant reading. Psellos, as a philosopher, was not used to yielding to directives or his friends' instructions, but made up his own mind on the nature of the facts. So the censure was inevitable. But he persuaded himself to appropriate the father's proposals as his own, not because of his request (the philosopher again), but because the facts of the case demanded it. He seemed to hear the voice of *philia* saying that he should. Hence the father should expect him to undertake the matter more energetically than if he had received many requests. He would look after the pupil because of the father and the boy's own character, which made Psellos tend him with words like a farmer watering a tree. The father's remaining requests would be fulfilled, but the boy would do the work, with Psellos playing only a supporting role.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 202: mss L, H. Creuzer 1823, 607–8, ep. 12 (Greek text); Bernard 2017, 26 n. 55.

KD 267 UNADDRESSED

Psellos replied to a monk whom he called 'spiritual father' [probably in a general, not personal sense]. He had received a sweet letter that reached the

depths of his soul, like rain rousing his mind to fruitfulness. Several images construct the monk as on top of a high mountain. Psellos desired passionately to meet him in person, but now enjoyed his letters, drawing delightful spiritual benefit from his holy knowledge. Psellos' position involved teaching on all subjects. As well as the pure bubbling stream of spiritual works he sometimes studied secular texts, to expound them and use them as an aid in Christian teaching. By comparison, they were second-rate and cloudy. But the monk's words were excellent: they were brief and sweet, not wordy but rich in meaning, like drops of holy moisture hollowing out a rock to receive grace for spiritual benefit. They were attractive as avoiding the usual loud, bombastic preaching but providing modest teaching of virtue. If Psellos were ever freed from the bonds of the capital, he would spread his wings and fly to the monk, achieving his desire. The monk's mountain was hard to climb, but the holy trumpet of his voice was audible from the foothills.

Date etc.: 1052–4, an early stage of Psellos' plans for tonsure (excursus 11). The mountain imagery must reflect the real Mt Olympos.

Moore 517: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 608–9, ep. 13 (Greek text); Angold 1995, 35 n. 40; Duffy 2001, 91 n. 15; Grünbart 2005, 163 n. 216, 312, 313, 314; Kaldellis 2007, 207 n. 59; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

KD 268 UNADDRESSED

Psellos said that the recent death of a *kouropalates* had devastated everybody, especially his beloved correspondent, who was unprepared for it and also faced many other problems. Psellos too was overwhelmed, but consoled by the fact that the man had repented near the end and died in the prime of life without experiencing decline, like Alexander the Great in his thirties. After the death of the friend who linked them, the mutual *philia* of Psellos and his correspondent must increase beyond all bounds. Psellos would talk of this when they met, for he felt responsible for the children of the *vestarches* [his adoptive son-in-law]. The rest of the letter shows feverish anticipation of this interview, when he feared he would burst into tears (he was crying as he wrote). His correspondent alone (apart from the emperor) called him *hypertimos*. When could he come? It was 10 March: would it be tomorrow, or later? How could he wait so long? Would he come directly, or via the army? He was desperately anxious to see and hear him—the pride of his family—and embrace him daily for weeks, months, even years.

Date etc.: after c.1068, maybe 1071. Psellos is *hypertimos* (excursus 9). The precise date of 10 March is not matched to a year. One tragic young *kouropalates* to die at this time was Manuel Komnenos, eldest brother of the future Alexios I, who died in Bithynia in spring, 1071 (unfortunately in April). Manuel had led the Anatolian expedition of 1070, but was defeated with heavy casualties. Because of his death his mother, Anna Dalassene, prevented Alexios from

joining the Mantzikert campaign. But for the problem of the month, this might suggest that Psellos' son-in-law had connections with the Komnenoi.

Moore 212: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 609–10, ep. 14 (Greek text); De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 142–4 (partial French translation); Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 19; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 204, 201 n. 22, 217, 268, 280, 318, 358; Sarres 2005, 51 n. 86, 98, 220 n. 43; Jeffreys 2017, 75.

KD 269 UNADDRESSED

Psellos complained that a clerical friend wrote too rarely to keep up true *philia*, as letters were a vital means of contact from a distance. He asked him to correspond more regularly, recovering his old friendly attitude to Psellos, or at least not to increase the gaps between letters. Psellos would write more often if he found carriers, and would reply to each letter received, as if answering questions. Thus the rhythm of the correspondence, fast or slow, depended on his friend. He thanked him for the bronze vessels.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 60: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 610–11, ep. 15 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 14; Karpozilos 1984, 30 n. 130; Karpozilos 1990, 243; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 203, 218, 339; Lauxtermann 2017, 103 n. 37.

KD 270 TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION

Psellos mentioned the famous (and virtuous) monk Elias to the *krites*, who already knew of him. Elias planned to travel all round the world, but had decided to visit Thrakesion, to speak to the *krites* and exchange benefits. Elias would provide eloquence, a pleasant character, and services in areas of his expertise. He would receive wisdom from the *krites*' mind and maybe some gift from his hand. Psellos knew that the *krites* would react with a frown, no sign of a smile or a relaxation of tension. But he wanted Elias to make him unwind, laugh, and enjoy every pleasure and delight. Those like the *krites* who were involved in serious matters needed frequent relaxation and humour. Elias would offer plenty of such opportunities, and what is more, in the holy robes of a monk.

Date etc.: c.1065–8 (excursus 4). The journeys of Elias should be dated to the 1060s.

Moore 307: ms H. Creuzer 1823, 611, ep. 18 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 78, 105; Dennis 2003, 53 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 124, 160–1; Grünbart 2005, 326.

KD 271 TO THE EMPRESS [EUDOKIA]

Psellos wondered what gifts to offer the empress, to whom he ascribed, without flattery or rhetoric, overwhelming beauty, unbounded intelligence

and superiority of mind—qualities which made him regard her as a divine being. All earthly blessings would not be sufficient to honour even one of her virtues. But she should not be surprised or contemptuous when he sent her bread, wine, and fruit, nor think it an insult. A philosopher's gifts indicated things greater than themselves, using symbols: bread represented the bread of life, wine spiritual joy and fruit grace and mystical beauty. She was the most beautiful woman of all time both in physical and moral terms!

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1). KD 271–2, praising the empress while sending the same gifts, might be alternatives, like S 143–4 (FLORIS BERNARD). But symbolic gifts were sent at festivals, presumably yearly (KD 260). It is equally possible that these were letters sent on the same occasion in different years.

Moore 463: mss B, H. Creuzer 1823, 612, ep. 20 (Greek text); Karpozilos 1984, 27 n. 88; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 11, 181 n. 379, 183 nn. 394 and 402, 185 n. 420, 243, 247, 248, 361; Limousin 2014, 164, 166, 169.

KD 272 [TO THE EMPRESS EUDOKIA]

What on earth could be worthy of her godlike and truly imperial soul? Not even the whole universe was equal to her virtue and overwhelming beauty. Psellos asked the empress to accept his gifts in a symbolic way. Bread showed her as ground fruitful in inspired actions, wine as a vine flowing with life, fruit as a delight of the seasons, as a source of pleasures, as an unceasing spiritual joy. He would say more, but was afraid of the ban on flattery—or rather he could not say all he wished. These words came not just from his lips, but from his very soul.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1). See KD 271.

Moore 55: ms H, c¹. Creuzer 1823, 612–13, ep. 21 (Greek text); Karpozilos 1984, 27 n. 88; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 11, 181 n. 379, 359; Limousin 2014, 164, 166, 169.

KD 273 (= S 36) TO IOANNES XIPHILINOS

Psellos was both near Xiphilinos and far away. He did not define near and far in spatial terms but by measurement of relationship and attitude. So he was very close to him and his soul. Though God made Xiphilinos his own earlier, that did not mean he rejected Psellos, for he did not call all into the vineyard at the same time. Some were summoned at the eleventh hour; Psellos perhaps at the third. Though he had not answered at once, he had not used the excuse of his wife or his newly bought estate, but he put on his shoes and leapt at the opportunity. If he followed the same road as Xiphilinos, he would have the same reward—or less: for the other had gone first. If not—but he should say

nothing to tempt fortune. The lavra of Kellia had been given to Psellos, and the monk carrying the letter was sent to receive it.

Date etc.: 1052–4, as Psellos planned to retire as a monk to Olympos (excursus 11). KD print ‘To the *krites* of Opsikion’ from ms L, while Sathas (printing P) conjectures ‘To Ioannes Xiphilinos’. This is confirmed by the text, which says that Psellos’ correspondent became a monk before Psellos, and so could not have been a *krites*. For Kellia, see pp. 54–5.

Moore 235: mss P, L, H. Creuzer 1823, 619–20, ep. 26 (Greek text); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 44, 54–5 (partial Russian translation); Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 14, 158 n. 34, 162; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Criscuolo 1976, 60–1; Ljubarskij 1978, 49, 101, 104 n. 84; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 345 n. 76; Ljubarskij 2004, 84, 155, 159 n. 105; Angelidi 2005, 227 nn. 1–2; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 15; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23, 10 n. 27, 254; Jeffreys 2017a, 48–50, 54–5.

KD 274 TO SAGMATAS, THE RAIKTOR

Psellos sent Sagmatas a baby sea-fish with an absurd name, an absolutely delicious treat. But to possess Sagmatas’ soul he would forgo all sweet tastes, sights, fragrances, and music. His friend’s soul should not be naked, but in his splendid, heroic body. Sagmatas teased Psellos as lovers do, playing hide and seek. Whenever Psellos caught him, he slipped out of his arms and passed through the sanctuary doors, excluding Psellos with the imperial curtain. Why this trick? Was Sagmatas afraid that Psellos would tire of seeing and speaking to him, and end their *philia*? Yet one may speak of boredom with sex but not with spiritual *philia* from soul to soul, which never ended. Sagmatas should not hide himself from his spiritual lover, but display his beauty and incredible charms. If it was possible to speak of families of souls, he would presume to say that Sagmatas’ and his own were related, knowing each other well and wishing to remain for ever linked by bonds of common feeling. Each seeing the other at once went into ecstasy, and their impulses became ungovernable. For the body does not block the eye of the soul, but rays emitted from it easily rebound from the mass of the body and nothing can stop them.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 171: mss L, H. Creuzer 1823, 621–2, ep. 31 (Greek text); Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 47; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 17; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 298, 254.

M 1 (= G 11 [MOORE 367] + G 12 [MOORE 66]) TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS/TO [AIMILIANOS] THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Maltese edited G 11 followed by G 12 as one letter (M 1): But G 12 has a different addressee from G 11 in more than one ms. It seems clear they are two distinct letters.

Moore 367, 66; Maltese 1987–8, 86; Volk 1990, 17 n. 52, 300 n. 3; Ljubarskij 2004, 113 n. 58; Grünbart 2005, 336; Kaldellis 2007, 209 n. 64; Riedinger 2010, 12–13 (French translation).

M 2 (= G 14) TO AIMILIANOS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos was about to censure Aimilianos for long silence despite his attempts to persuade him to write, when a letter arrived, of such quality that he could not reply and blushed at having thought of censure. After years of contact he had long known of the patriarch's superior virtues, but knowledge now turned to admiration. It was rare now for fame to be combined in this way with modesty of character, confirming the ancient poets. Aimilianos rose to the heavens to commune with God without losing close contact with those on earth, becoming the interface of the human and the divine, reaching perfection and provoking comparisons with Elijah and Elisha. It was impossible to compete with Aimilianos in a contest of mutual encomia, since he deserved so many times more praise than Psellos, giving the latter a huge handicap to overcome. A particular admirer of Aimilianos was Psellos' friend Joseph, to whom he mentioned the letter. Joseph's consequent flood of praise for the patriarch nearly reduced Psellos—for the first time—to silence, and continued so long that he stopped listening. He thanked Aimilianos for unspecified gifts (far more than Elijah's), more an indication of philosophy than of patriarchal munificence, and asked him to reward Joseph.

Date etc.: c.1064–6 (excursuses 5 and 7). Identification is in the mss.

Moore 83: mss U, M, E, e, a¹, m². Weiss 1972, 33–4; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Gautier 1986, 150–3 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 86–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 251.

M 3 (= G 15) TO AIMILIANOS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos asked why Aimilianos had failed to write for so long, as his letter showed such talent. Maybe he was so close to God as to lose interest in his fellow men. Beginning as an ascetic, now on golden patriarchal wings he reached extreme heights, from which great religious men often did not return. But for Psellos it was greater perfection to combine speaking with God and care for humankind, with the necessary adjustments. He noticed at several points in the letter that Aimilianos remembered the world. His eloquence showed human concerns, and his assumption of the archbishopric had not only raised him to God but also modestly lowered him to human level. His wisdom was not without rhetorical force, for he had needed much guile to convince people of Psellos' intellectual primacy. He persuaded Psellos (of course), but surprisingly all those to whom Psellos showed the letter. It proved

him supreme in the capital, but also as a teacher in Antioch, Alexandria, and among Greek-speaking Arabs. He was a universal professor, suddenly raised from mediocre to magisterial status. To confirm his boasts beyond doubt he often showed Aimilianos' letter, demonstrating his prestige. But it also helped him show Aimilianos' own great virtue, and was supported by Joseph, whose eloquence over Aimilianos was an irresistible weapon. Psellos' opinion of Joseph's skills also greatly rose, as he spoke with natural fervour of his benefactor. Aimilianos must not relapse again into silence, but write more letters to fulfil his debt of eulogy to Psellos.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursuses 5 and 7). Identification is in one branch of the ms. tradition.

Moore 6: mss U, M, E, e, a¹, m². Weiss 1972, 33–4; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Gautier 1986, 153–5 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 86–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 251; Bernard 2014, 176 n. 74.

M 4 (= G 16) TO AIMILIANOS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

The famous city of Antioch and Aimilianos, its prime ornament, as he reported, nearly danced to celebrate Psellos' poor, short letter. How should Psellos react to the divine trumpet of Aimilianos' own letter, ringing in his ears? He needed a virtual city, with citizens of all ranks and a choir, to read them the letter with inspiration and great verve. This could only be his soul, whose many parts were ruled in different ways. When Psellos read them the letter, his intellect exclaimed in praise, his intelligence applauded louder still, his judgement enthused over details, his imagination was astounded at the whole, his perception appreciated its varied literary qualities and cried out as lovers do before their beloved. This reception eclipsed that of Psellos' letter in Antioch. But Psellos himself, after the moment of enthusiasm, stood a little apart, visibly uncomfortable. On reaching the point in the letter where the patriarch complained of his excessive praise, he blanched, thinking this a rhetorical attack on his poor encomia. If false, this should be ignored; if true, he could only plead that it was not a true eulogy but a reply to a letter. How could he have undertaken so lightly the praise of a man of divine stature? Aimilianos as a philosopher was easily satisfied, but if he also wanted rhetoric, Psellos had to overcome his long neglect of the art—unless their common protégé Joseph would suffice. His natural eloquence, trained by Psellos, made him a good substitute. Maybe he was superior to Psellos in rhetoric, though Psellos could combine rhetoric with philosophy.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursuses 5 and 7). Identification is in the mss.

Moore 177: mss M, E, e, a¹, m². Weiss 1972, 33–4; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Gautier 1986, 155–8 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 86–7; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 254; Papaioannou 2011, 56 n. 41; Papaioannou 2013, 36 n. 29, 96 (text and English translation of a substantial passage).

M 5 (= G 17) TO IOANNES XIPHILINOS

Psellos welcomed the fact that Ioannes at last had turned back to him and written: had he descended from above, or had Psellos risen towards him? He hoped that Ioannes would often be able to talk to him in human terms, without losing his divine links. Ioannes was on course for heaven [on Mt Olympos]; Psellos had set sail, as promised, but was becalmed, needing Ioannes' help. Spiritual helmsmen (like Ioannes) might control winds and seas as well as ships, not using his hands but his tongue. Psellos hoped, even without a sail, to reach harbour with his aid. He added philosophical thoughts on divided human motivation and its inability to overcome the dead weight of the body. His longing for Olympos was such that it was amazing that he had not yet left. At court, he had no remaining ambitions for wealth or glory, which revolted him. He was only interested in philosophy, writing, and the beauty that led one to the divine beauty itself, despite the pagan writers that annoyed Ioannes. When the thin thread still holding him to the capital broke [probably the future of his adopted daughter Euphemia], he would leave at once.

Date etc.: 1054, as Psellos was about to retire as a monk to Olympos (excursus 11).

Moore 241: mss U, M, E, e, a¹, m². Weiss 1972, 31–2 n. 78; Ljubarskij 1978, 49; Gautier 1986, 158–61 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 87; Volk 1990, 26 n. 94; Ljubarskij 2004, 84; Angelidi 2005, 227 nn. 1, 3; Grünbart 2005, 64 n. 36, 167 n. 255, 220, 337, 356; Metzler 2007, 297 n. 64; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 15; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23, 37 n. 29; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

M 6 (= G 32) TO THE MONK AND *PROTOSYNKELLOS*
[LEON PARASPONDYLOS]

Psellos told Leon Paraspodylos [from whom he had received a letter about his misfortunes] that his friend's soul was still deeply afflicted. This explained his own delay in helping: he was just following the medical rule not to treat sickness at its beginning. But now he was gently using his art to soothe the problem. Leon's philosophical turn meant that his mind was drawn to contemplation, not earthly things; but he was still a compound of soul and body and could not spurn the latter—an early insight won by contemplation, which never showed its initiates all its mysteries at once, but alternately revealed and concealed them. Though traces of his problem and its scar remained, this was the time for Psellos to apply healing remedies, having kept them in reserve, not out of fear (as Leon thought) but to increase their power. His letter had revived his friend, together with his own maturity of soul, and made him narrate more nobly and serenely than before the misfortunes he had suffered. In this he showed his innate philosophy in good times and bad, resisting flattery and censure. Such philosophy takes a primarily human or divine form: the blow which afflicted Leon impelled him towards heaven. But he must think of

returning, and not refuse the plans made for him by Psellos. He should resume his normal way of life, and Psellos would in time pay the great debt he owed him. A person's intimate thoughts are hard to decipher: many had accused Psellos of flattery over Leon. He now bared his heart before him. Neither there nor in his words would he find the slightest trace of deceit.

Date etc.: More likely to be dated 1051–4 than 1057 (see excursus 12). Psellos began to apply remedies for the misfortunes Leon suffered under Monomachos.

Moore 14: ms U. Weiss 1972, 25–6; Ljubarskij 1978, 94 n. 74; Gautier 1986, 185–7 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 215; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 328–31; Ljubarskij 2004, 145 n. 91; Grünbart 2005, 218, 356; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5; DIETHER REINSCH.

M 7 (= G 30) TO IOANNES XIPHILINOS

Xiphilinos hardly sent a drop from Horaia Pege, when he could have sent a river. Economy and restraint were epistolary virtues, but not extreme brevity. In fact a rich supply of goodness was a sign of great godliness, with all its channels aimed at this world. But Xiphilinos was very selective in what he shared. Perhaps he was testing Psellos' resolve, so as to be asked again before sending the rest. Maybe it was another tenet of his hesychast school (or of his return to God), to know a lot but say little [lacunas]. Xiphilinos, who studied this, would know better. Psellos, claiming expertise in philosophy, the supreme knowledge, would judge the state of his friend's soul. To sum up, he should be brief to Psellos, to avoid charges of idle chatter, but must change his tune for his brother and nephew, and often charm the ears of the powerful over them, with all his skills. This was a virtuous act, if prescience is characteristic of God and divine souls: otherwise why supplicate the souls of the departed, if they did [not] have prescience by divinity? Psellos feared (with philosophical bluntness) that his friend's motive was not hesychasm but conceit. He concluded this from Xiphilinos' words: maybe his friend's language was too clever for him. He laughed at the fiercest part of the letter, the complaint over Psellos' title. Had he not often called Psellos supreme in literature? Psellos' title sealed the reality. If he were just *proedros*, with no mention of philosophy, he would not object to Xiphilinos' criticism. But the addition made the title fit precisely. Xiphilinos should speak to him both as philosopher and *proedros* [more incoherence through lacunas].

Date etc.: c.1053. The title of which Xiphilinos complained seems to have been '*proedros* of the philosophers', Attaleiates' version of the title given Psellos by Monomachos. This was probably the original title, changed to *hypatos* before 1057, when he gained a different *proedros* title.

Moore 262: ms U. Weiss 1972, 32 n. 81; Ljubarskij 1978, 49, 52; Gautier 1986, 183–4 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 215–16; Ljubarskij 2004, 84, 88; Grünbart 2005, 64 n. 36, 92 n. 131, 218, 222, 314, 352, 356; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 15; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23; Bernard 2014, 176 n. 75; Jeffreys 2017a, 46 n. 23; Lauxtermann 2017, 102, 113 n. 79, 114 n. 84.

M 8 (= G 28) [TO A HEGOUMENOS]

The hegoumenos had written Psellos a letter and sent a monk, Dorotheos, to explain part of it. Psellos replied, wondering whether Dorotheos had other business; otherwise he had wasted his journey. When they reached the point in the *hegoumenos*' letter where he was going to make many requests (perhaps too many for a letter), and told them to consult Dorotheos for more information, he just repeated what was in the letter. Psellos could only laugh. Dorotheos was very talkative, but Psellos had to do things again. He applied to the tax officials, who readily wrote to Lygdenos and gave credible explanations over the estate. It was not independent, nor leased on its own. It belonged with many others to the Kazeia *episkepsis*, and the *episkeptites* of the 11th (?) [Lygdenos?], once appointed, controlled it without interference from the *sekreton*. This was not just credible, but true. When they heard that a new *hegoumenos* [Psellos' correspondent] was in place, the officials asked the *episkeptites* to lease the estate to the monastery, unless another lease was agreed. Psellos hoped this would now happen, and all would be well; if not, it would be done on the *hegoumenos*' next visit, together with any other business Psellos could arrange, including the *hegoumenos*' official meal. He finally asked for spiritual help.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). The letter is marginal to the definition of the network, but the detailed investigation of the case Psellos conducts, with no sign of personal interest, suggests the 1060s.

Moore 112: ms U. Weiss 1972, 26 n. 54; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Gautier 1986, 181–2 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 216; Oikonomides 1996, 124 n. 6; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

M 9 (= G 29) UNADDRESSED

Psellos had read his correspondent's letter and eaten the salted fish, a feast for soul and body. Plenty of food for the soul was available from the Gospels, the Church fathers, and distinguished ascetics and martyrs. But there was nothing suitable for the body from these sources. Fresh sea fish was nourishing, but he found it uneatable. Cheese was nice but harmful, salted whale meat indigestible. So he found his correspondent's gift of salted fish nourishing and tasty. His taste was perverse: near his correspondent [on Olympos?] he wanted sea-fish, but when he relocated [to the capital?] he developed a liking for river-fish (as on Olympos). Like Israel he despised divine manna and longed for the food of Egypt. But his self-criticism did not stretch to wanting death in exile rather than at home. His desire for his former food was not too taxing. So much for what he had received; he had sent in return forty silver coins, ten pieces of aloe wood and fifty jars of ointment.

Date etc.: c.1055–7. The letter should be dated soon after Psellos left Olympos, as his dietary comments show. Gautier's suggestion that the recipient is Xiphilinos is unlikely, if only because of the gifts sent.

Moore 168: ms U. Weiss 1972, 24 n. 45; Gautier 1986, 182–3 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 216; Grünbart 2005, 314; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23.

M 10 (= G 23) TO [AIMILIANOS] THE
PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

[Maltese edited this letter from an acephalic ms, so Gautier's edition has been preferred.]

M 11 (= G 31) UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to a friend, probably not a churchman. Only the end of the letter survives: it is impossible to guess how much has been lost. He contrasted their two roles in their lifelong collaboration. His correspondent's unchanging attitudes differed from his own more flexible views. He would not make excuses by saying he was responding to the other's favours with other favours, equal or better. Their relations were more complex. He offered eloquence, the other replied with actions, or rather both contributed in both ways, one mainly with words and the other with actions. His words led to good deeds, the other's actions were preceded by praise of Psellos. This link began in their youth and developed gradually. They were equally effusive in praise and gratitude, filling the cup of *philia*. Psellos was not satisfied if the other just gave what he asked, while his friend would give more than requested, as if censuring an inadequate request. In fact Psellos' requests were not inadequate, but his friend was superior in his response. This gave Psellos a good opportunity to address the problems of an (unnamed) monastery. If the other knew the case, he could supply missing details by bringing to life what had ceased to exist, like an animal in its death-throes. If not, Psellos would follow good rhetorical practice by stopping now and saving the request for later.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16). As the beginning of the letter is missing, details of what is discussed will always be imprecise. The process described resembles a virtuous circle, more characteristic of the 1060s than before.

Moore 528: mss U, A. Maltese 1987–8, 86–7; Bernard 2012, 39 n. 10; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 70; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

M 12 (= G 33) [TO IOANNES MAUROPOUS]

Psellos claimed to have been transformed beyond recognition, like Moses meeting God on the mountain. He had read the flattering praise in Mauropos'

latest letter, so that his enthusiasm was out of control and he was strutting about as if confirmed by a divine voice in total victory. Socrates refused to believe such a verdict: but his source was only the Delphic oracle, not Mauropous. He was preparing defences of indifference, in case more such letters came and he was tempted to make a fool of himself. He had been praised before, but not so eloquently by so perfect a judge. [Lacunas]. He would like to engrave an eternal copy, and keep it with him as a talisman and incontrovertible reference confirming his great ability and worthiness for the chair of philosophy. It would be more convincing than disciples of Pythagoras quoting their master's approval. The *notarios* agreed, loudly proclaiming his gratitude for having found so great a supporter through Psellos' mediation. There was no point in asking Mauropous to continue the good work with him, since he would do so unbidden.

Date etc.: 1047. This is probably a reaction to Mauropous (ed. Karpozilos), letter 23, recommending him for his chair of philosophy. This is probably the only early mention of a *notarios* in the letters. Though there was no 'university', it must be remembered that here and in KD 225 Psellos claims to hold a 'chair'.

Moore 323: ms B. Weiss 1972, 27 n. 59; Karpozilos 1982, 114 n. 19; Maltese 1987–8, 114–15; Kazhdan 1993, 93, 95–6; Papaioannou 2010a, 93 n. 35; Papaioannou 2013, 176 n. 33; Bernard 2017, 18; Lauxtermann 2017, 103, 106, 113, 117, 120 n. 107, 122, 123, 126–7 (English translation); MARC LAUXTERMANN.

THREE LETTERS TO AN UNIDENTIFIABLE SPIRITUAL FATHER

These seem to be the only letters addressed to this spiritual father, though it is doubtful whether they should be linked, as there is no obvious connection in content. Weiss' suggestion that the recipient is Ioannes Mauropous (cf. M 12 and the possible mention of the monastery of Petra where Mauropous spent his declining years) is not convincing. The word merely refers to the parable of the production of fruit from stony ground.

M 13 To a spiritual father

Psellos told a spiritual father that he wanted, if possible, not to be controlled by changeable circumstances, but to be, as it were, a motionless centre beside the moving circle of life. Now he was like wandering planets, carried around by every influence. His character was not simple, but made up of contrary essences, moving and motionless: some, like his father, could with divine wisdom stop this movement by unmoving spiritual nature, though he was uncertain if philosophers like himself could achieve this completely. Psellos, who knew very little of what might hold back this motion, lived like a raft surrounded by waves, blown by every gust. He did not stand like a boxer

confronting the blows, but his nature was exposed to all pressures, struck from all sides; before he escaped one wave he was washed over by another. He not only grieved for his own problems, but for others' disasters too. Yet he did not despair, and philosophy was a potent consolation. His father could help with letters, but he asked him to reduce these, and give direct aid. This was enough philosophy to answer the other's offering.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 47: mss B, O. Weiss 1972, 27; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Agati 1980, 909–10; Karpozilos 1982, 114 n. 17, 119 n. 51, 120 n. 52; Maltese 1987–8, 114–15; Mogenet 1989, 90; Karpozilos 1990, 27 n. 97; Kazhdan 1993, 89–90; Ljubarskij 2004, 73 n. 7; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

M 14 To a spiritual father

[A very brief letter, lacunose and probably fragmentary.] In the three surviving lines Psellos seems to adopt an aggressive posture on a subject which cannot be inferred.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 78: mss B, O. Weiss 1972, 27; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Agati 1980, 910; Karpozilos 1982, 114 n. 17; Maltese 1987–8, 114–15; Maltese 1989, 189, I(e); Mogenet 1989, 90; Kazhdan 1993, 89–90; Ljubarskij 2004, 73 n. 7; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

M 15 To a spiritual father

Psellos had received a gift of some delicious grapes, and thanked the sender, in some way [obscured by a lacuna] implying that they grew miraculously from stony ground. They tasted as if they came from Eden or the Euphrates. He wished his spiritual father's stony ground would become rich and well-watered soil for the production of enough fruit to satisfy Psellos, after his correspondent's ascetic needs had been met.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 134: mss B, O. Weiss 1972, 27; Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 6; Agati 1980, 910–1; Karpozilos 1982, 114 nn. 17–8; Maltese 1988, 114–5; Maltese 1989, 187, I(a); Mogenet 1989, 90; Kazhdan 1993, 89–90; Ljubarskij 2004, 73 n. 7; Grünbart 2005, 255; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

M 16 TO MICHAEL [KEROULARIOS], THE PATRIARCH

Psellos asked Keroularios what demon was stalking him, what slanderer had abused him for so long, constantly attacking his body as if tempering steel, and besieging his soul like a city, openly and in secret. Its attacks grew stronger the more it was beaten off. It distressed him but failed, for every gateway was barred. Its

aggression changed from time to time, its motives seemed pointless. For his part, Psellos had admired Keroularios at first sight, followed and imitated him. Then things changed completely: Keroularios became patriarch and Psellos a monk. Their paths diverged, but Psellos still heard him when he could and was drawn to him, feeling sympathy with every change in his fortune. Then there came a most painful crisis when he could not speak to the patriarch directly, and was punished for libel. All attempts to approach the patriarch in a friendly way met suspicion and rejection. Then for a moment contact improved, he was delighted and felt the problems had ended. But soon they became worse still: with Psellos absent and unable to follow events a slanderer was given credence, even by Psellos' supporter the empress [Theodora]. He challenged the patriarch to deny it. Then in a sudden, dramatic change Psellos was welcomed back as a prodigal son, close collaborator and ally: conscience may have played a role. He and Keroularios were both congratulated on this reconciliation. The allure of the patriarch's personality, his gifts, and the new contact enslaved him. But Keroularios again listened to accusers and broke off relations. He adopted an uneducated new tone. Every element in Psellos' past aroused suspicion: his rise to prominence, his chair, his regular access to the emperor. He acted with simplicity and was cynically outmanoeuvred, and became the unluckiest of men. None of his oaths or assurances was believed, and all received the same response. He would continue trying for good relations, however unfairly the patriarch treated him. He challenged him to reply, and to show this letter to anyone who might have contrary opinions. He remained utterly baffled by the patriarch's inconsistency.

Date etc.: 1055–6 (excursus 11). Reference to Theodora as empress dates this letter during Psellos' persecution by the church, which followed his departure from Olympos.

Moore 464: ms B. Weiss 1972, 28–9, 46–9 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 80; Maltese 1987–8, 115–16; Volk 1990, 33 n. 120; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 335–6; Ljubarskij 2004, 127; Jenkins 2006, 149 n. 51; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19, 155 n. 80.

M 17 TO NIKEPHOROS THE *DROUNGARIOS*,
BROTHER OF [CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW
OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS]

Psellos told Nikephoros that this letter might not be needed, as that to his brother [Constantine] was enough for both. But to stop Constantine boasting that he had got the best of it, he personalized the letter, to provide them with both common and individual letters. How were they faring with the emperors after Psellos' departure? He hoped they were doing better, or at least no worse. Complete success or failure in life was impossible: you should hope for the better of the mixture, and that meant happiness. Psellos played verbally with the roles of the different fingers on the hand, then said one must stand on his

own feet, and moved quickly on to greater complexity. He now (figuratively) saw Nikephoros panting and sweating, needing a breather, so he chose a more vernacular register. He asked what they discussed at dinner, and which of his speeches they remembered, serious or humorous. He hoped they used philosophy, and practiced writing in a poetic vein [lacunas]. He suggested a plot involving a nomad servant encouraged by his mistress, with eventual sexual content. Lysias and Demosthenes were possible models, and he recommended direct speech. After suggesting more plots, he hoped that the letter showed his *philia* and gave them some tasty dishes to discuss at dinner.

Date etc.: probably 1069, the only certain time when the mature Psellos left the capital. The plural emperors are presumably Eudokia's children, as Romanos was on campaign. Constantine, Nikephoros' brother was *droungarios* in the early 1070s. Nikephoros seems to have followed a similar career.

Moore 389: ms B. Weiss 1972, 29–30; Zaitsev and Ljubarskij 1981, 24–28 (edition with Russian translation); Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 111 n. 20, 113 n. 30; Papaioannou 2013, 22; Bernard 2017, 29; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43.

M 18 TO NIKEPHOROS THE *DROUNGARIOS*,
BROTHER OF [CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW
OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS]

Psellos told Nikephoros he had sent him a doctor skilled in bloodletting, not only for people but animals and trees, specializing in non-human patients. He would fearlessly use his bleeding-cup everywhere. But he warned Nikephoros never to be bled by him or treated in any other way. The touch of his hand was so powerful as to kill the patient at once. More surprising still, any oak he tried to operate on would immediately wither. What was he useful for, and what had been his main studies? Negotiating with Varangians, depopulating villages, exacting double payments, informing on others, sacrilege. Nikephoros was to treat him by opposites, with pity and assistance, and to send him back, to please Psellos, on horseback if possible, if not, barefoot.

Date etc.: after c.1069. See M 17. This is largely a joke: but was there a doctor sent, and if so, why?

Moore 31: ms B. Weiss 1972, 29 n. 66; Zaitsev and Ljubarskij 1981, 24–8 (edition with Russian translation); Maltese 1987–8, 117; Volk 1990, 442–3 n. 12; Grünbart 2005, 228; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 111 n. 20; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43.

M 19 (= G 34) [TO A METROPOLITAN]

Psellos wrote to a metropolitan, expressing spiritual dependence on him. [The letter consists of fragments: only parts are intelligible.] [. . .] As a river derives from the spring at its source, so the metropolitan was for Psellos the source of

virtues and delights. As a metropolitan, he was for him the representative of God. [...] Psellos knew that the metropolitan, like everyone else, was distressed by the state of the church. [...] Those who were vexed by unexpected problems, yet bore them nobly [...] The divine inheritance would be troubled from time to time, but would not fall, nor would the gates of hell prevail against it. This should be consolation for him. To return to a previous subject: though their friendship was real, their discussions would not be on an equal basis. One was of silver, the other of iron, and in their association the better must take precedence over the worse—important in beginning a correspondence.

Date etc.: undated. Moore discusses a difference of opinion over the reading of the lemma in ms B, concluding that it is probably illegible. Suggestions that it refers to the patriarch of Antioch should be rejected.

Moore 529: ms B. Canart 1967, 55; Gautier 1986, 190 (French summary); Maltese 1987–8, 117; Mogenet 1989, 91; Ljubarskij 2004, 149.

M 20 (= G 35) TO THE EMPRESS EUDOKIA WHEN SHE BLAMED HIM FOR INGRATITUDE

Psellos had asked Eudokia for a monetary gift, and she gave him a document. He thought, wrongly, it could be used more than once, to save constant humiliating requests. This led to censure from the empress, who called him ‘ungrateful’, a much greater affront than any financial loss. The whole letter is a series of rhetorical questions, repetitious and at a high emotional level, complaining that the word was unjust as a reaction to his supposed offence, to his behaviour in general towards Eudokia, and his service over decades to the imperial house. He had always been grateful to Eudokia for her many kindnesses, in explicit and implicit ways. Others she may have helped more, but he yielded to none in thanking her. He was more loyal than the apostles were to Christ. If she disagreed, he deserved exemplary punishment, but could not accept the word she chose. He had filled the earth with praise of her beauty and virtues. He was close to her family, especially her father, and she often called him ‘uncle’, and entrusted him with her children’s education. Of her imperial predecessors he named Constantine X, who made him share his table after his accession, Isaakios I, Zoe and Theodora, and Constantine IX, who almost created him out of mud, honoured him more than his own relatives and called him ‘teacher’. The current emperor Romanos IV praised him orally and in writing, and asked Eudokia to help him, while the patriarch [Xiphilinos] was another supporter. He admitted the misunderstanding about the financial document, but her criticism was unjust. He begged her to judge him not as ungrateful but as her grateful champion, remembering all he had written, and not to banish him from her presence.

Date etc.: c.1068–9, during Romanos IV's long absences. Romanos' request that Eudokia help Psellos may refer to an event recorded in S 5, written in early 1069, referring to 1068.

Moore 477: ms B. Weiss 1973, 248–50, 272–5 (Greek text); Gautier 1975, 329 (with comments on Weiss' text); Kambylis 1978, 139–40; Maltese 1987–8, 117–18; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 292–3 (partial French translation); Chondridou 2002, 41 n. 29, 57 n. 13, 166 n. 66; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 11, 181 n. 379, 185 n. 419, 239, 247, 347; Jeffreys 2010, 85; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 86 n. 148; Papaioannou 2013, 44 n. 61, 45 n. 66; Limousin 2014, 164, 166, 170 n. 41, 173.

P 1 TO THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS* [LEON PARASPONDYLOS],
IN A MORE PHILOSOPHICAL VEIN

Psellos, with the irony he regularly used towards Leon, addresses him as an inferior to a superior, as a body was to a soul. As Logos is the common link between God, nous, soul, and body, Psellos returns now to Paraspondylos by the Logos of this letter. If Leon received answers to questions he asked God and debated with him, why did not Leon fulfil this divine role with Psellos? Before he had not been so uncompromisingly hostile to earthly things: he had, for example, once praised Psellos' writings and the greatness of his soul, and deigned to speak to him in a friendly way. So he put to Leon a simple question which troubled him: which virtue was superior, that which led directly to the next life, or that which also enhanced life on earth? The struggles of his soul suggested the former, his humanitarian connections the latter. This question would be solved when he and Leon met for a discussion. He hoped to become one of those for whom Leon had heartfelt concern; Psellos asked that Lizix too be added to this number, so that he might be included in Psellos' own first person singular.

Date etc.: 1055–6, which is more likely than 1057 (see excursus 12). It is tempting to assume that Psellos needed the interview to discuss the possibility of gaining a position.

Moore 538: ms A. Papaioannou 1998, 107–17; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 339; Reinsch 2017, 125 n. 5, 129; DIETHER REINSCH.

PSELLOS AND THE SECOND WEDDING
OF CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE
PATRIARCH KEROULAIOS (3 LETTERS)

Constantine's first wife died in the 1060s, and he married as his second wife a Georgian aristocrat who came to Constantinople to attend the wife of Michael VII, Maria of Alania. The wedding may thus be dated to c.1073, around the time of the marriage of Michael and Maria. Constantine naturally invited his good friend Psellos to the ceremony. But Psellos was a monk outside the monastery; he may have recently adopted a fuller observance of monastic decorum, without returning to the institution. The first letter is his

largely negative reply to the initial invitation, detailing parts of the wedding he could not attend. Constantine repeated the invitation (in a lost letter), with assurances that the ceremony would be decorous and would not upset him. Psellos' second letter is more positive, while maintaining some reserve. He went to the wedding, and the third letter shows that he enjoyed himself without embarrassment.

S 1 To Constantine the *protoproedros*, the *droungarios*

Constantine, nephew of Keroularios, had invited Psellos to his [second] wedding. Psellos replied that his profession of philosophy provoked envy, and so there were many people attempting to legislate in minute detail for what he could and could not do, restricting his freedom. Some were respectable voices on the side of the good. He ought to make his own decisions, not compromising between what he wanted and what others wanted to prescribe for him, but he was exposed to malicious tongues. As a result, he tended to abstain from eating and drinking in public, and kept away from private parties and public festivals—except perhaps this one. There was no reason for a philosopher, seeking to free his mind from his body, to adopt this code, but that meant nothing to the spiteful quibblers whose sole interest was in denigrating people. The preliminary and religious parts of a wedding were open to him, but his rules forbade attendance at other stages. He stressed that his promises to God to avoid many activities did not mean that he was forbidden from observing them. The compromise he adopted meant that would attend the wedding, but not in an absolute way. He would not listen to music, for example, despite his expertise on the subject. But he had seen Constantine's young bride in the palace, a bright, cheerful girl; in fact he thought she was far the prettiest woman there, apart from Constantine's mother. He congratulated him and wished them well, certain there would be an excellent meeting of souls as well as bodies, and many sons and daughters. Thus, if appropriate, he would attend the wedding, but would not drink from the wedding bowls.

Date etc.: c.1072–3 (excursus 10). Psellos seemed to be more nervous of attacks on his conduct made because he was a philosopher than because he was a monk; though tonsure was also a problem.

Moore 38: mss P, C, t, b, p², a⁷. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 180; Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 73; Gautier 1970, 215 n. 36; Gautier 1976, 109 n. 41; Ljubarskij 1978, 63, 68, 124; Snipes 1981, 96; Volk 1990, 225 n. 21; Angold 1998, 233 n. 37; Chondridou 2002, 117 n. 54; Ljubarskij 2004, 104, 110, 186; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 320, 225, 226, 236; Kaldellis 2007, 215 n. 79; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, n. 22; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71; Bernard 2017, 29 n. 68; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 76, 79 n. 58; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

[S 83] To Constantine the *megas droungarios* when he invited him to a wedding

If, Psellos asked, he were forbidden by law to fight lions, and Constantine caught one, removed its claws, and told him to fight it as the missing claws cancelled the ban, would he be right? Similarly, if he removed songs and other details of his betrothal and made it as serious as possible, should he urge Psellos to attend? A lion without claws remains a lion, and a wedding without songs a wedding. He might hide a woman's hair and finery and make him sleep with her, as what he saw was not a woman: both word and idea must be checked. Weddings without music he attended before were shorter but as real as full ceremonies. A change of detail did not alter the essence. If Constantine could show that a betrothal without music was something different, involving no ban, he would accept, but not otherwise. Equally, removal of vital elements might ruin any ritual. So Psellos could not attend a marriage, nor Constantine omit parts of the ceremony. Psellos was allowed parts involving church and liturgy, but was barred from those implying hippodrome and theatre. These rules must not be flouted lightly. The basic difference was between fundamental reconstruction and surface change: Constantine was not changing the wedding, but altering details. A crow with new feathers was still a crow, though it looked different. Psellos' solution was to attend acceptable parts of the ceremony, but then Constantine should not let him leave, almost tying him up like Odysseus to hear the Sirens' song—willingly, for he was no more solemn than David, who wrote the Psalms for musical instruments. This would solve the crux of the problem for Psellos, the metropolitan [Ioannes] of Side, or anyone else.

Date etc.: c.1072–3 (excursuses 10 and 15.3).

Moore 98: mss P, C, t, b, p², a⁷. Korydaleus 1625, 116–19, ep. 4 (Greek text); Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 73; Gautier 1970, 215 n. 39; Gautier 1976, 109 n. 41; Ljubarskij 1978, 63, 68; Volk 1990, 225 n. 22, 226 n. 24; Chondridou 2002, 117 n. 56; Ljubarskij 2004, 104, 110; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 285, 174 n. 320, 225; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 112 n. 22; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 76, 79 n. 58; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

[S 84] To Constantine the *megas droungarios* when he invited him to a wedding

Psellos admitted to misgivings over the marriage preliminaries, expecting to be met by blaring musical instruments, then pelted with apples by women from side doors and with roses from above, his hearing strained by a marriage song. That was why he seemed nervous, in case he cast a black-robed shadow on bright festivities. He did not realize the ceremony would tastefully mix Graces and Muses, not without philosophy; it was the

opposite of his expectations, a truly philosophical ceremony he would have hated to miss. It was like the better features of the Eleusinian and Mithraic mysteries, with a hint of the Panathenaia. It blended a popular Eros with a higher religious form: Constantine's Graces both rose naked from springs and were clothed with holy vestments, sometimes showing intense sexuality for lawful love, sometimes philosophical solemnity. His ceremony mixed a sexual aura with music, philosophy with enjoyment, and a fitting song, unaccompanied and with solemn rhythm. Psellos was only a trivial part of the scene, but he was devoted to getting closer to Constantine (and his brother)—his main purpose in life. He stalked him, via his father, via the patriarch, via his mother—the personification of virtue—via his whole family. He felt their souls were kindred, sharing an identity and a similar character. The betrothal brought Psellos and Constantine together as much as the happy couple. He enjoyed the ceremony he had nearly missed: his nature was inclined to share in any joy he met, especially in the case of Constantine.

Date etc.: c.1072–3 (excursuses 10 and 15.3).

Moore 82: mss P, C, t, b, p², a⁷. Korydaleus 1625, 119–21, ep. 5 (Greek text); Gautier 1976, 109 n. 41; Dakouros 1977, 64 n. 1, 73 n. 3; Ljubarskij 1978, 63, 65, 68; Volk 1990, 226 n. 25; Ljubarskij 2004, 104, 106–7, 110; Grünbart 2005, 174 n. 320, 225, 281; Papaioannou 2006a, 108 n. 38; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 112 n. 23; Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 76 n. 51, 79 n. 58; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

S 2 = Moore ORA.69: Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, no. 18

S 3 TO THE EMPEROR ROMANOS IV DIOGENES, WHEN HE WAS AWAY ON CAMPAIGN

Psellos wrote to Romanos IV congratulating him on a victory, which he could picture in detail in his mind's eye, having closely observed Romanos' physical and mental qualities for many days. He was a match not just for Turks and Arabs but for great heroes of the past. The capital was excited, and admired Romanos for not boasting of his feat—though Psellos trumpeted his success. He told the empress Eudokia, praising Romanos' determination and giving her an eyewitness report of frugal camp life. She wept in an ecstasy of joy, thanking God and seeking details, admiring Romanos' bravery, love, and all his other virtues, as described by Psellos, increasing her affection. He spread the news throughout the capital, with all his eloquence. The patriarch [Xiphilinos] was delighted, as were the senate and the individual senators he approached, while he made sure that the populace heard too. Even the

emperor's infant son smiled and squirmed when Psellos whispered into his ear news of his father's victory. Psellos promised untiring praise of the emperor, thanking him for telling Eudokia of an unimportant favour for Psellos, referring to himself as a dead dog. He asked Romanos to return soon.

Date etc.: 1069, after Psellos had returned early from Romanos IV's second Anatolian expedition. Hase and Miller 1875 wrongly combine S 3 with the oration S 4 (Moore 2005, 964).

Moore 105: mss P, B, p¹. Hase and Miller 1875, 17–20, 117–25, 664 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 119–20 (partial Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 73 n. 3; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12, 35 n. 125; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 291–2 (partial French translation); Limousin 1999, 351 n. 23; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 12, 143 n. 54, 183 n. 401, 242, 243, 247, 256, 288, 359; Papaioannou 2006a, 96 n. 3; Jeffreys 2010, 87; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 70, 220 n. 87; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 4 = Moore ORA.70: Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, no. 19

S 5 = Moore ORA.71: Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*, no. 20

S 6 TO THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS] KOMNENOS ON CAMPAIGN

Psellos wondered what offence the capital had committed against its sun-emperor to be so long without his light, a pitch-black night without even the rays of the empress-moon. Psellos felt the exclusion strongly, being deprived of the sight and sound of the emperor and his virtues, after doing no wrong and committing himself totally to him. His misery was unbearable, beyond tears, that the emperor's recent displeasure had hardly passed before this worse problem came. The rift should now be healed, yet he still had no contact. The emperor's light was available, yet he was still in darkness. If his sins were being punished, he would prefer any painful death to this. He believed the emperor was well disposed, so why did he show disdain and disregard? Isaakios should not think he wanted imperial contact for its glory and glitter: he wore a monk's robe and despised worldly success. What he needed were Isaakios' beauties of soul and character, his intelligence, his charm and social graces, his mixture of modesty and eminence, and also his love of wisdom, attractive for a philosopher. Psellos was constantly hunting him but had not caught all of his mighty body and soul; Isaakios, thinking that catching a philosopher was too easy, turned to other kinds of hunting, in which Psellos wished him well. He should not fail with boars and deer, dogs and fellow hunters should play their part in an enjoyable and successful hunt. What he specially admired was Isaakios' ability to combine work and play, meets of the hunt and meetings in the sekreta, points of law and of the spear. He wanted to praise this at greater length, but as their separation was unbearable, he summoned him with a letter. Isaakios should return as soon as possible!

Date etc.: 1058–9. During Isaakios' last campaign; cf. excursus 5. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 56: mss P, L, U. Zervos 1919, 73 n. 3; Limousin 1999, 351 n. 23; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 12, 241, 242; Papaioannou 2012, 191 n. 61; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Papaioannou 2013, 35 n. 22, 160 n. 90, 219 n. 85; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 7 TO LEON THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

As Leon explained himself and his own nature, it was a waste of time, Psellos said, in a letter of bitter sarcasm, for others to colour him differently. Everyone had a double, or (philosophically) triple nature, two opposite elements and another blended of both. Psellos' portrayal was based on this mixed factor, a soul using a body. He assumed he had something in him corresponding to each element. Leon, knowing himself better, showed the reality of his soul. Psellos, being earthy and substantial, thought his own sickness was sickness, blows were blows, wounds were wounds, taking the words literally, by Protagoras' 'Man is the measure of all things'. Experiences like external temperature and pain were, for him, literally true. But for Leon it was a matter of belief and conviction: things were not as they were, but as he thought them to be. There was certainly truth in this, but also pride and self-regard. His words and attitudes despised earthly life. He called our precarious life blessed, and slept on stone as on a soft mattress; his view of the same water changed from drinkable to salty, bitter to sweet. He should persist in this, rising ever higher in spirit by divine intervention. The problem was, Psellos said, that philosophy based on the mind without concession to the body had died out, and Leon was the only example in the present generation. Having met Leon, he thought him an extraordinary phenomenon of philosophy, human or divine, worthy of the grace of the Seraphim. Psellos had encountered beliefs that souls could accompany superhuman beings, but found them hard to believe. Now the embodied reality had overcome his reluctance. Leon should hold fast to the golden chain pulling from above, and not stop till he reached the top.

Date etc.: 1051–4, despite similarities with letters dated after Leon's rise to prominence (see Reinsch, Chapter 6, this volume, and excursus 12).

Moore 308: mss P, U, M, E, e, a¹, m². Ljubarskij 1978, 92 n. 69, 93, 95; Maltese 1988, 26 no. 1; Angold 1998, 233 n. 36; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 331–2, 339 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 142 n. 86, 144, 147; Grünbart 2005, 64 n. 36, 220, 356; Jenkins 2006, 133 n. 7; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66, 150 n. 70, 215 n. 71; Reinsch 2017, 134–6, 138–9 (English translation).

S 8 TO LEON THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Strict *philia*, Psellos told Leon, meant that Psellos should share equally with him in his sufferings. But Psellos, with lesser *philia*, turned from practical

sharing to verbal consolation. They agreed that a non-philosopher differed from a philosopher in that one lived by senses and desires, the other by higher reason, making knowledgeable choices. The non-philosopher found the loss of what he wanted very painful. But for a philosopher like Leon it was not he who suffered, but his earthly body. Reason, with which he chose to live, was unaffected by disasters usually called painful. Leon must now show true philosophy, purified from ambition. We are a mixture of soul and body: the soul is what we are, but the body's heavy burden often diverts the soul from reason. So philosophical reason removed some or all bodily matter, letting the soul rise to heaven, as happened to Leon. Men added extra evil to the iniquity of the body, leading to complete depravity. So the Saviour freed the soul from downward pressure, and Leon flew up to God. In living with the body, some souls were so blinded that they could not escape; but others (like Leon), with God's help, could be freed from their bonds. Leon should not think this a problem, but a true blessing. The soul is not double, dealing separately with heaven and earth, but single, with tendencies up to God and down to the body: Leon preferred the former. Life in the body uses deceitful means to attract us. God removes its superficial beauty, showing the ugliness and hypocrisy which Leon now recognized in his earlier life. Leon wanted to be known as loving God, not matter, and he had achieved this: philosophy not wealth, love of the divine not baser love, life with the angels not an armed escort, closeness to God not the emperor. Psellos once likened Leon's soul to a flawed pearl. Now he saw it as flawless and perfectly round. His earthly problems, like a martyrdom, deposed him from earthly thrones to raise him to higher seats in heaven. Psellos congratulated him, yet was too cowardly to share his sufferings. He would give him friendly consolation in words, while remembering Leon's many generous acts. He would look for a suitable time to praise Leon before the emperor [probably Constantine IX].

Date etc.: more likely to be dated 1051–4 than 1057 (see excursus 12). A letter of consolation praising Leon Paraspondylos for higher status in philosophy than Psellos himself. It then concentrates on Leon's lack of an office. The ironic letter ends in hypocrisy, congratulating Leon on escaping employment, then promising help to find imperial favour.

Moore 28: mss P, D. Gautier 1975, 329; Ljubarskij 1978, 92 n. 69, 94; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 328–30 (French summary); Ljubarskij 2004, 142 n. 86, 145; Grünbart 2005, 218, 228, 357; Sarres 2005, 93 n. 218, 215 n. 20; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5.

S 9 TO LEON THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Psellos asked Leon if he had mastered bodiless communication from mind to mind, while Psellos vainly attempted normal speech and script. He tried Greek, Ancient Greek, and foreign tongues, hoping Leon would reply in one or the other; but Leon had some basic dialect, unknown to Psellos, not made of

nouns, verbs, and letters. Yet even so, he should sometimes use human language, like his colleagues the angels. Even God addresses us and answers questions in our own tongue. Leon did not even use the mumbo-jumbo of sorcerers' spells or Apollo's oracles. Apollo sometimes refused to reply because the question was asked in the wrong way. Was Psellos' question untimely, or unphilosophical in form, content, or language? Was it not addressed to the right title (probably divine and Chaldaean)? If Psellos were a barbarian or tree, his friends would speak to him in the right language. Though his mastery of Attic was acknowledged, he could get no reply from the Atticist Leon. He made only a one-sided conversation like an idiot: Psellos' fire brought no smoke from Leon. And Leon claimed to treat everyone equally, ignoring hierarchies. Psellos complained he had the same apparent position in Leon's world as uneducated barbarians or mules. In the old days Leon admired all his words; now he ignored him and rejected any praise of him. He seemed afraid of enchantment by his words. But he was safe against them, and Psellos no longer tried to beguile him. Leon should just speak with God, going at will up and down the heavenly ladder.

Date etc.: 1051–4 (see excursus 12). There is irony here, and Reinsch makes a good case for bitter irony throughout.

Moore 255: ms P. Zervos 1919, 61 n. 1; Ljubarskij 1978, 92 n. 69, 94–6; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 324–8 (substantial French translation), 339; Ljubarskij 2004, 142 n. 86, 146–8; Grünbart 2005, 356; Papaioannou 2013, 45 n. 66; Reinsch 2017, 128–31, 138, 139–40 (English translation).

S 10 TO THE *PATRIKIOS* LEONTIOS, NEPHEW OF THE METROPOLITAN OF PATRA

Leontios had advised Psellos, through Lizix, to write to Leon the *protosynkellos*, and he told Leontios he had done so, in the *meson* (middle) tone. The *meson* was a region of the voice just above the *hypatoeides* (bass). He used the word not out of badly timed ambition or a hunt for neologisms, but because Leon in avoiding extremes was a mixture of opposites. In some ways he was solemn, in others jovial. Psellos' text imitated his character by treating a philosophical subject in a rhetorical way. And he thought the question was appropriate: that Psellos should hesitate between the two [religious and secular] lives would stop Leon from dismissing one side out of hand, as Psellos knew he would. The prelude to all Leon's words and actions was to be dismissive. Leontios should use some magic art to bring down the moon, or at least to compress its circle into a letter-pouch. If time were not so pressing, Psellos would have made some spell for him in an outlandish language. But he would hear that later. Now it was time to transfer the *solemnion* to Psellos; the letter to be written should be like that he dictated to Lizix the *patrikios*.

Date etc.: 1055–6 (excursus 12). Psellos took advice from a friend on persuading Leon Paraspondylos to renew some grant he had received, clearly during the time when Leon was in power. There are unexplained references here to obscure elements in the relationship between Psellos and Leon.

Moore 136: mss P, A. Gautier 1978, 86 n. 15; Oikonomides 1996, 184 n. 114; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 320 n. 12, 340–1; Grünbart 2005, 353; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5, 129.

S 11 [TO LEON THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*]

Psellos had been silent to make Leon begin the conversation, then wrote to elicit a reply. His inconsistency was explained by differing circumstances. The first two-thirds of the letter give conventional explanations of communication by letter, an extension of direct speech for those unable to meet. He was trying to get Leon to reply to his letters. [This summary concentrates on unusual features of the explanation.] Any excuse that Leon was too busy was undermined by his previous obsession with the written word and the Attic register of language. Why was it now that other activities stopped him writing? The excuse that a philosopher thought more than he spoke was also weak: did he have no hands to write as well as no voice? Psellos admitted that meeting in epistolary imagination seemed second rate, since all live with bodies. Psellos and Leon were both in the capital and could meet, so it was harder to justify letters: Psellos said he preferred the written word to unconsidered oral speech, as picturing the writer's personality in a clearer and more delightful way, less affected by accidental factors. If Leon claimed anything else was more important to him than *philia*, he was condemned out of his own mouth. In the last third of the letter Psellos went on the offensive: the real reason for Leon's silence was his ascent to great power, which led to contempt for the mortals around him. He no longer thought of honour, learning, and art, but bodyguards, thrones, and glorious positions, and his language changed to reflect this. He now evaluated not discourse but precious stones, he now studied not the plan of a speech but that of his mansion, he preferred craftsmanship to rhetoric, making the educated life his least concern. He thought he had risen very high, but in fact he had fallen very low, and lost all that was important. If Leon combined respect for his previous wealth (learning) with his new riches (money, etc.), Psellos would not grudge him the change, but praise him, not flattering him but supporting him in his new prosperity. If he changed attitudes just as others changed their climate, he would not blame him, nor forget their old *philia*. But Leon should prepare replies to the attacks of others less well disposed.

Date etc.: 1055–6. Moore states that ms B, which alone provides an address, merely indicates it was the same as that of the previous work: *Πρὸς τὸν λαιδορον ῥήψαντα χάριτην* (A. Littlewood, *Oratoria minora*, no. 7). However this oration has very little in common with S 11. De Vries-van der Velden proposes that the addressee was Leon Paraspondylos, with arguments which are

persuasive though not conclusive: Psellos' correspondent is an old friend, a philosopher, and is very slow to respond to his letters. He has suddenly achieved a position of dominance, has some contempt for his inferiors, and expresses himself briefly. In ms P the letter follows four others addressed to Leon. If the note from B is made to operate in P, the letter is addressed to Leon.

Moore 215: mss P, B. Tinnfeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 160 nn. 46–7, 163; Littlewood 1976, 216; Volk 1990, 130 n. 4; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 328–30 (French summary), 342–3 (substantial French translation); Mottana 2005, 235; Sarres 2005, 405 n. 52; Papaioannou 2012, 182 n. 39; Papaioannou 2013, 43 n. 56.

S 12 TO NIKOLAOS [CHEILAS], PATRIKIOS
AND EPI TON DEESEON

Psellos praised Nikolaos, but not his attitudes to others' comments. He did not react at all to high praise, but even mild criticism infuriated him. Nikolaos was a clever man, but his reactions proved non-philosophical and superficial. He was overdefensive, trying to make himself impregnable to any attack. In doing this he spurned literary charm, friendly raillery, wordplay, and humour, which alone made life worth living. Nikolaos was a handsome man, but Psellos had joked about his looks (apparently over a swollen lip). Plato, Aristotle, and other ancients mocked others' appearance and dress. Psellos expected Nikolaos, as a philosopher's friend, to worry more over the beauty of his soul than such externals. In fact he at once responded to taunts in kind: in healing the insult he struck a heavier blow, raising moral issues. Psellos accepted Nikolaos' humour calmly, but the other seemed to take a small graze to heart and make it a deep wound. A real man was defined not by body but soul. The body and its social life cohabits with the soul like a shell. The philosopher can withdraw from it whenever he wishes, not concerned with external propriety or hurt by taunts on his appearance. Nikolaos seemed to Psellos like kithara-players who, as well as making good music, embellish their instruments to no purpose. If someone really insulted him, how would he behave, as he took humorous mockery so badly? Psellos' own reaction was quite different. Humorous writers were just as beneficial as deep philosophy. He hoped the comments in his letter would heal Nikolaos: if not, he should at least react as much to praise as to criticism.

Date etc.: 1057–9. Nikolaos was to lose his property after the revolt against Constantine X in 1060–1. The family name 'Cheilas' is cognate with the Greek for 'lip', suggesting Psellos' joke.

Moore 526: mss P, L, U, Y, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 25–9 (Russian translation); Weiss 1973, 115 n. 379; Gautier 1976a, 91; Ljubarskij 1978, 61, 69 n. 43; Maltese 1988, 26 no. 2; Volk 1990, 272–3 nn. 10–12; Limousin 1999, 350 n. 18; Ljubarskij 2004, 100, 111 n. 57, 170 n. 281; Grünbart 2005, 352; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 100 n. 195; Papaioannou 2013, 43 n. 56; Bernard 2015, 186 nn. 63–4, 187 n. 66.

S 13 = Moore ORA.11: Psellos, *Oratoria minora*, no. 11

S 14 UNADDRESSED

Just as a lamp needs oil, so affection is in danger of withering if lovers do not speak to each other, face to face or by letter. Hence Psellos wrote this epistle. Fearing that prolonged separation at distance and a lack of conversation might quench the fire of endearment, its purpose was to stir up the embers, to bring back to life their dying glow and return them to a full blaze. He remarked how long a time had passed with no exchange of letters, no friendly greetings, no encouraging words. The writer blamed himself for the long silence, but also his correspondent, who had been no more communicative. He asked him to say how things were with him, hoping they were fine and as he wished. Affection was a hardy plant, but it needed fertilization and watering with letters, as he trusted his correspondent would do.

Date etc.: published among the letters of Leon of Synada and almost certainly written by him. It is hard to guess why it is preserved in P, the most authoritative ms of Psellos.

Moore 209: mss P, F, *Vienna Phil. gr.* 342. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 163; Vinson 1985, 56–7 ep. 34; Mullett 1988, 9 n. 35; Grünbart 2005, 269; Papaioannou 2012a, 304 n. 51.

S 15 UNADDRESSED

Basil wrote a conventional letter of consolation to a church that had lost its bishop. The letter, he said, was in a long but not continuous tradition. He advised them not to grieve like pagans but to look after the church, hoping for the speedy election of a successor.

Date etc.: this is a letter of Basil the Great (no. LXII), preserved for some reason in P, the most authoritative ms of Psellos. It is a letter of consolation to the church of Parnasos, written in 371 at the death of their elderly bishop. It might be relevant that Psellos wrote three letters (KD 75, S 62–3) either to the bishop of Parnasos of his day, or dealing with his business. The summary given here is deliberately brief.

Moore 201: ms P. Sarres 2005, 51 n. 86, 98, 157; Papaioannou 2012a, 304 n. 51.

S 16 UNADDRESSED

Psellos had written a rather critical letter to a younger correspondent, from whom he had received a treatise. He now congratulated him on an ideal reply. He said that his criticism was not intended to elicit an academic display of philosophy, but evidence of the man's philosophical character and writing skills. He was delighted to receive both, a good reply in rhythmical prose. He thanked his correspondent for accepting his criticism well, without anger, as he had hoped, and called him a true philosopher, whereas he would have denied this title if the reaction had been different. As he exceeded expectations,

he enrolled him as one of his pupils, even appointing him as their chief, despite his Socratic tendencies. He was to be the link between Psellos' secret knowledge and divine revelations and his public, a true philosopher. He also offered him teaching, maybe in the most advanced of subjects, to go with his gentlemanly character, self-sufficient spirit, clear-sighted adoption of models and unflinching assumption of theoretical concepts. He was sure he would accept this praise with modesty. However, the man needed lessons not only in philosophy to free his mind from matter but also in rhetoric, to make his works more rhythmical. In both fields Psellos was the acknowledged master. His correspondent should train his mind and tongue appropriately.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 30: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 170; Tatakis 1977, 160 n. 105; Tatakis 2003, 130 n. 111; Grünbart 2005, 81 n. 23, 207, 228; Jenkins 2006, 146 n. 41; Papaioannou 2012a, 305 n. 55; Papaioannou 2013, 22 n. 60, 36 n. 29; Bernard 2017, 25 n. 50; FLORIS BERNARD.

S 17 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos wrote to a friend, dividing philosophy into two parts: the abstract and dispassionate, which he admired without liking it much, and the practical and sympathetic, which he approved of less but wanted to practice, looking after parents, relatives, and friends. His request was of the latter sort. A relative of his [name suppressed] was very close to him, and he often accepted the man's requests to ask favours of all sorts on his behalf. The *krites* was not to be surprised by them, for this too was a part of philosophy, one which greatly interested him. Psellos requested help for him, of a kind to be described by messengers from the man who made the initial request. Psellos was sure his correspondent would put a satisfactory end to the affair.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No dating criteria apart from use of the network.

Moore 140: ms P. Tatakis 1977, 175 n. 193; Tatakis 2003, 145 n. 199; Grünbart 2005, 221, 292; Papaioannou 2006, 169–70 (English translation); Kaldellis 2007, 210 n. 66; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11.

S 18 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos gave a letter to the bishop of Noumerika to present to the *krites* of a theme [Opsikion?]. The bishop and the letter he carried complained about some *proeleusimoi* [probably tax officials], a protest which Psellos himself had supported as a witness. While trying to help the bishop, Psellos had been replaced by the emperor [did his correspondent succeed him?]. The *krites* was asked to finish the task in which Psellos had been interrupted.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69 (excursus 16.3). Hostility to tax officials may suggest a date before 1060, which might also be the case if Psellos' correspondent succeeded him as *krites* of the theme. The location of Noumerika is unknown, but it was a suffragan bishopric of Nicaea, and thus presumably in Opsikion.

Moore 324: ms P. Oikonomides 1996, 281 n. 75; Grünbart 2005, 176 n. 335, 261; Riedinger 2010, 16 (French translation).

S 19 UNADDRESSED

Psellos told a distinguished layman that he had inherited many friends from his father, especially those of whom he was speaking. They were of good character, with an honest affection for him; they also said they had a family claim on him, but that was not why he made them his friends. Now he was supporting them in an application for help from his correspondent. His only argument was that they were his friends. If his correspondent thought highly of Psellos, this claim would be equivalent to an encomium. If he did not, then he should assess the men for himself: this experience would make him praise Psellos for doing well in testing those who approached him and choosing the best as his friends.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 144: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 179; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 222, 230, 292.

S 20 [TO A KRITES (OF KATOTIKA (?))]

Psellos wrote to a *krites*, saying that it was natural for him to befriend Athenians and Peloponnesians for a variety of reasons. It was necessary to promote the descendants of Pericles etc. on account of their ancestors, even if they were inferior to them. He had recommended other Athenians, and was now writing for one (the letter-carrier) who had also been a friend of his father. He did not ask for justice, which the *krites* would offer unbidden, but for compassion and sympathy in its application.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There is nothing to suggest a date except use of the network.

Moore 247: ms P. Rambaud 1877, 279 n. 3; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 174; Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7; Saradi 1995, 186 n. 94; Kaldellis 2007, 223 n. 101.

S 21 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos wrote to a *krites*, congratulating him on showing his friendship by speedy solution, at Psellos' request, of the problems of a tax-collector of his

theme. This immediate performance of a favour for an absent friend was the essence of *philia*. His letter was a record of what had been done and a spur to future action. He asked him to respond to these thanks by doing the same again for the same man, completing the favour for Psellos that he had begun so well.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.3). Positive comments on tax collectors suggest the 1060s.

Moore 472: ms P. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 4; Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 159, 163; Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Limousin 1999, 359 n. 55, 361 n. 72; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1300; Ljubarskij 2004, 181; Grünbart 2005, 217, 356; Gkoutzioukostas 2007, 67 n. 1.

S 22 UNADDRESSED

Psellos' correspondent thought he was just sending a friendly greeting and a few words. But Psellos thought he learned all about him through the picture contained in the words, going back to his archetypal image. Did he not know that Psellos tried to be a philosopher, and so examined everything in a more exalted way? He should write often (but not too often), and Psellos would speculate as he wished about what he wrote. He should not think that Psellos would intervene with the emperor because of his little gifts, but because of his longstanding friendship. For that he would speak out and go out on a limb. His friend should just contribute simple *philia*, but Psellos needed to respond with twice as much, so as not to be found wanting over the obligations of friendship.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 421: ms P. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 163–4; Grünbart 2005, 218, 285.

S 23 TO THE *EPI TON OIKEIAKON*

Again harassment, again a request, again Psellos was being annoying and offensive. But he knew the victim on whom he was imposing, one who found it no burden to be given tasks by the hands of friends, who was not oppressed by having requests piled on him by an affectionate tongue, like Psellos' own demands on the huge, all-encompassing soul of the *epi ton oikeiakon*, who very easily carried the burdens of his friends. Psellos asked his correspondent to practice writing signatures and train his hand, and create his personal pearls (his letters), shape them into spheres and thread them on a string as a beautiful amulet for Psellos. He should encourage his subordinates to do the same, so that—as spheres were in question—he should be the heaven, perfectly round

and symmetrical, while they should be little stars, moving around at his bidding and impulse.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 376: ms P.

S 24 (= KD 142) To Zomas, krites of Opsikion

S 25 TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN

Psellos complained he no longer had the mind which created noble letters, his fiery tongue had been quenched, and any flowers he had plucked from the meadows of Attica had withered, together with the fading beauty of Lizix the *vestarches* [whom he was mourning]. He, alive or dead, had always seemed charming to Psellos. Even after his passing he was numbered with the youthful, even in death he remained in full bloom. But Psellos, who still lived on, had little remaining breath and his torch of words had been snuffed out. If he tried to say any of his usual things, he was blinded with spiritual tears and so disturbed that he could say nothing intelligent. As for his correspondent's business: he would like to help, and he usually found such matters easy, as he knew the basic shapes from studying geometry. However, the letter to which he was replying was delivered by the carrier as he left, not as he arrived, not leaving him enough time to read the whole text and understand the issue before writing this reply. He wished the *krites* farewell, hoping he would replace the eye Psellos had lost in Lizix.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 2). Psellos was in mourning for the death of Anastasios Lizix. The *krites* of Aegean at that time was Nikolaos Skleros (see KD 127), who had long been known to Psellos, and was Lizix's uncle. It is not easy to see how this letter could have been written to him without revealing these facts; but how could it have been any other *krites*?

Moore 15: mss P, L. Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11; Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30.

S 26 TO THE KRITES OF KATOTIKA

He told the *krites* his supposed treasure was ashes. If he was not satisfied with living and working in the places of famous Hellas, much-desired and much-praised, source of the fighters of Marathon and famous Philips and Alexanders, where else in the world would be good enough to receive him? Were the many speeches about Attica, and all the ancient sages wrote about Piraeus then false and vain, just pointless bluster? He should consider where else to put himself, unless he suggested fortunate Antioch, golden Alexandria and blessed Arabia, but Psellos feared that those names too after reverberating

like thunder had now fallen silent and were completely forgotten. Psellos' advice was proverbial: you should try to do credit to the place where you found yourself. Everywhere, without exception, was now thrown into confusion, every kind of boat and ship was sinking, and none was secure and steady and in the water. Living off half a loaf was better than no bread: there was no better ship on which to embark. If the *krites* predicted otherwise, he might stick to his own tripod, but Psellos' advice was in his interest.

Date etc.: nw after c.1060 (excursus 16). The military and political situation resembles that of the 1060s.

Moore 25: mss P, L. Rambaud 1877, 279 n. 2; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 175; Duyé 1972, 171 n. 24; Ljubarskij 1978, 108; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 135; Ljubarskij 2004, 165; Grünbart 2005, 220; Kaldellis 2007, 222 n. 98; Kaldellis 2009, 123 n. 23.

S 27 TO THE MONK IOANNES OF OLYMPOS

Psellos thanked Ioannes affectionately for the fruit he sent with the monk, and for his prayers. Rather than those who were clever and crafty, he preferred straightforward old men (like his correspondent) whose speech was in tune with their hearts, whose style had a salty wit, and whose writing was unlearned but of spiritual value. He assured Ioannes that he never enjoyed any of the many wise words he heard and the books he read more than a plain, simple discourse, spiritual and pure. He also took pleasure in a monastic character unspoilt by education, such as he could enjoy with holy men like his correspondent. He hoped to have the chance to join them before his death.

Date etc.: decade of 1050s. It is not clear whether Psellos had met Ioannes: in the decade of 1050 Olympos was important in his thoughts both before and after his residence there.

Moore 169: mss P, D, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 55–6 (Russian translation); Weiss 1972, 27; Gautier 1974, 17 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Agati 1986, 187–90 (Greek text and Italian translation); Maltese 1988, 26 no. 3; Kazhdan 1993, 89–90; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Grünbart 2005, 314.

S 28 TO LEICHOUCES, THE *PROTOVESTIARIOS*

It was the first day of Lent, and Psellos was attending to his devotions, when an old man boldly approached him. He was lying outside his gate, weeping and wailing loudly, so he could not drive him away. Psellos broke off and went down to see him. He only requested that Psellos write a brief note to Leichouces about him, expecting some benefit to result. He chose Psellos as intermediary, lacking more holy intervention. Psellos refused, not daring to write in this way to a man of Leichouces' supreme wisdom and eloquence. But the man supported his request with enough sworn promises to melt even a stony heart. So he wrote to Leichouces on two matters, first to pardon his presumption, second, that he

should gain his request, not so much for the man as for himself. Psellos wanted Leichoudes' good will more than anything else, and it was plain to all that his friend regarded him with favour. The man, being a blabbermouth, would do one of two things: if successful, he would trumpet the fact, if not, he would lament his failure, not without implications for Psellos.

Date etc.: 1057–9. Leichoudes probably occupied a prominent secular position as *proedros* and *protovestiarios* at times from the reign of Constantine IX to that of Isaakios I. This letter and S 73, maybe showing him at the height of this phase of his career, are probably to be dated near the end of this period.

Moore 2: mss P, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 56 n. 23; Ljubarskij 2004, 92 n. 31; Grünbart 2005, 266; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6.

S 29 TO ZOMAS, KRITES OF OPSIKION

Psellos told Zomas he was just as annoyed at constantly petitioning the same people, especially those like Zomas devoted to justice, as was Zomas at replying. But circumstances forced him to prattle on again: Zomas must be philosophical and patient. He had acquired the monastery of Medikion, as insignificant as its name. He knew nothing of its landholdings, but was well aware it was mortgaged. Many advised him that if he paid its debts, bought various animals, planted vineyards, improved water supplies, and worked at it as best he could, he would harvest a hundred measures of wheat, up to double of barley, and unknown quantities of oil. It would need a large investment before turning a profit, so he sent two messengers, one his monk, the other the letter (no less eloquent, even alive), to seek timely advice from Zomas, who was better informed than other advisors. He was condemned to host Zomas once a year at Medikion: he should be delighted, but he wept. If his friend Zomas was entertained at this poor monastery, it would be hard to persuade successors not to follow him. He was not worried about hosting Zomas, who ate like a philosopher. (He was more concerned about seeming a skinflint, especially to a friend: his request was not to save money—he promised Zomas whatever he wanted, provided he spared the monastery's supplies.) He begged Zomas to keep tax collectors away, since when successors came, Psellos would probably be on Olympos rather than in the palace. To stop Zomas thinking this was just meanness, he rephrased the request, telling Zomas of his acquisition, asking him to treat it and its monks as belonging to a friend, and promising effusive gratitude.

Date etc.: 1052–4, an early stage of Psellos' plans for tonsure and caring for his monasteries. See excursuses 8, 11 and 16.3. For Medikion (the name is formally a diminutive), see pp. 53–4, 55.

Moore 362: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 41–3 (partial Russian translation); Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7, 71 nn. 2 and 5; Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 52 n. 159, 148 n. 508; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 24, 101; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 30; Harvey 1989, 146 n. 136, 159 n. 195; Oikonomides 1996, 113 n. 164, 280 n. 71; Chondridou 2002, 359 n. 226; Ljubarskij 2004, 50 n. 26, 155–6; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27; Jeffreys 2017a, 50, 53, 55.

S 30 TO [ROMANOS], METROPOLITAN OF KYZIKOS

Psellos responded to another in an apparently endless series of gifts from the wonderful metropolitan of Kyzikos: corn, barley, and other things. The metropolitan was like a sea, replenished by rivers which (he hoped) covered the massive outflow. If they did, then he welcomed continuation of the gifts. He asked when he would have good news about Euripos? When could the metropolitan (verbally) kill off the aged owner of the Artigenes monastery? When Psellos saw him several Olympiads ago, he seemed so wrinkled that he must die at any moment, but he still lingered on, making a mockery of his monastery's name Artigenes ('New-born'), which might hint at rebirth. Despite the false rumours, his longevity was taking on mythical dimensions. But the good old man should not die on Psellos' account, but be nursed to the same good health as he wished for the metropolitan.

Date etc.: before 1063, maybe shortly before. The destructive earthquake of 1063 would make the light-hearted tone of this letter difficult for some years (cf. S 178). For Artigenes, see p. 52.

Moore 274: mss P, O. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 179; Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Weiss 1973, 147 n. 504; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 48; Maltese 1989, 190–1, II(e); Volk 1990, 28 n. 104; Jeffreys 2017a, 52, 54–5.

S 31 TO THE *MEGAS OIKONOMOS*

Psellos asked the *megas oikonomos* for some grain, a request appropriate to the economic skills implied by his title, but only a few measures, a tiny quantity from so grand an official. He supported his plea by precedents from the Old Testament, and by a sketch of his correspondent's professional activities, going daily to the harbours and inspecting the grain-ships, their cargoes and their prices, hiring men to guard them and so on. He included an impressive list of terms describing types of grain. In all this, it should be easy to acquire a few measures without payment to satisfy *philia*, like vultures bearing young (they say) without male involvement. If he succeeded, Psellos would give him all the credit; if not, he would make no further requests, seeing this as marking a lack of affection. Psellos should not be making such requests of a busy man, but food was the one commodity that everybody needed. In fact, Psellos himself had enough grain, but he was making the request for a poor nun.

Date etc.: undated. Surely the recipient was a nun, not Psellos' sister?

Moore 52: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Grünbart 2005, 72, 249, 254; Cheynet 2008, 215 n. 37.

S 32 (= KD 74) To the krites of Katotika

S 33 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos told the *krites* that the chief tax official (*dioiketes*) of Athens, as soon as he caught sight of the renowned land of Hellas, began to bewail his lot as if he had seen the land of the Scythians. None of the landmarks of the classical city could console him. The many-faceted views of the Athenians meant for him just many facets of disaster. In fact, not sharing the education of Psellos and the *krites*, he could not persuade the Athenians to pay him their taxes. The *krites* must thus persuade him, with words or if necessary with actions and threats, and restore him to the capital before he completely loathed Hellas, but still had something to say in its favour.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.3). Regret at the failure of a tax official suggests the 1060s.
Moore 327: mss P, L. Rambaud 1877, 279 n. 1; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 175; Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2; Duyé 1972, 171 n. 24; Ljubarskij 1978, 107–8, 110; Volk 1990, 365 n. 22; Oikonomides 1996, 49 n. 18; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 133–4 (partial French translation); Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 290 n. 1301; Ljubarskij 2004, 164–5, 167; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 291; Gkoutzioukostas 2007, 78 n. 49; Kaldellis 2007, 222 n. 98; Kaldellis 2009, 103 n. 24, 123 n. 23; Kaldellis 2011, 663 n. 40.

S 34 TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA

Psellos introduced to the *krites* yet another protégé, who thus also belonged to the *krites*. It was right to make this equation: when the man was offered the choice of any theme in which to serve as *protonotarios*, he had (on Psellos' advice) selected that of the *krites*, for good reason. He wanted to act on the stage supported by the strongest pillar. Hearing that Psellos' dearest friend in the world was *krites* of Hellas, he chose to work in Hellas and nowhere else. Psellos asked the *krites* to make the man an ally, or rather to offer him a port in a storm. Psellos regarded Attica as a storm, or something worse. The merchants themselves raised waves against the ship, increasing the swell. The *krites* should calm them and bring his *protonotarios* to a peaceful shore, by his natural kindness, by his *philia* for Psellos, and his generosity towards petitioners.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). A recommendation for a *protonotarios* suggests the 1060s.

Moore 211: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 175; Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2, 71 n. 4, 74 n. 5; Ahrweiler 1966, 152 n. 4; Duyé 1972, 171 n. 24; Weiss 1973, 49 n. 152; Ljubarskij 1978, 107, 110, 119; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 134; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 289 n. 1295, 290 n. 1299; Ljubarskij 2004, 164, 167, 180; Grünbart 2005, 356; Kaldellis 2011, 663 n. 40; Bernard 2017, 38 n. 113.

S 35 To the metropolitan of Amaseia [see KD 54 and the four following letters]

S 36 (= KD 273) To Ioannes Xiphilinos

S 37 TO XIPHILINOS AS A MONK

If Xiphilinos was not again too busy in conversing with God, he should come down (or back) to read Psellos' letter. He would discover his friend was very unhappy in his good fortune. He was not much charmed by the empire, the glittering palace and the like. He felt there like a cheap, common pebble mixed in with gemstones, not so much ornamented as discredited by their proximity. Comparison of white and black side-by-side showed the white whiter but its opposite blacker than it really was. The emperor placed him close to himself and paid him great honour. But for him to draw close to the ruler of this world was to withdraw from the first ruler; the closer he got to the one, the further from the other. If he did not have the consolation of philosophizing among his books and conversing with intellectuals, he would regard his present situation as a complete absence of anything good. Since he considered what he had as slavery and what he desired as freedom, his servitude to life was voluntary. In binding himself absolutely to the capital, he was afraid of himself and uncertain he could really escape. He had broken some of the threads that bound him, but not all, for the thickest were unbreakable. As he left they seemed for a time to come undone, but if he persisted, they held him back. His attitude to business in the city showed either philosophy or endurance. He thought it was philosophical slowly and calmly to loosen the link, but in reality it showed weakness. If he sailed on past the Sirens, he would regard this as the end of his prosperity. If he did not, how long could he sit with his ears stuffed with wax so as not to hear their song? Homer was right to stress the deadly seductiveness of their music.

Date etc.: 1054. Psellos is living as a monk in Constantinople (excursuses 11 and 13).

Moore 126: mss P, B, p¹. Hase and Miller 1875, 53–55, 144–6, 666 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 55 (partial Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 68 n. 3, 71 n. 3; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Ljubarskij 1978, 49; Maltese 1988, 26 no. 4; Ljubarskij 2004, 84; Angelidi 2005, 227 n. 1; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 16; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

S 38 (= S 172) To Chasanes, vestarches and krites of Macedonia

S 39 TO CHASANES, VESTARCHES AND
KRITES OF MACEDONIA

Psellos hoped that the request he made for the *notarios* Michael was a just one: he should be sent home, as his wife was seriously ill, and she was more important to him than profit or anything else. Perhaps it would be no use for him to see her dying, but their relationship was such that one sight of his beloved would be called a benefit. He was grieving away from home anticipating her death, while she as she died found his absence intolerable. Whether she died or survived, the *krites* should count one day for his journey and three or four for him either to

mourn her or hearten her if he found her alive. He would then return at once. Psellos knew the man was breaking the rules, but everybody would pardon him for his plan, especially the sensitive and conscientious Chasanēs.

Date etc.: nw decade of 1060s (excursuses 5 and 16.1).

Moore 64: ms P. Weiss 1973, 120 n. 402; Ljubarskij 1978, 110–11; Volk 1990, 340–1; Kyriazopoulos 1997, 196 n. 702; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 289 n. 1295; Ljubarskij 2004, 167, 169; Cheynet 2008, 639 n. 75; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 117 n. 25; Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30.

S 40 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos began with a grandiloquent greeting to Mauropous, then made a request for a poor old man—not to remove his wrinkles nor make him rich, but just to take pity on him (as he would in any case). The man was very pressing, and Psellos laughed; when he asked why, he said that the request was very moderate. The man solemnly said he just wanted to see Mauropous, hear him, and shake his hand, making it sound like a divine visitation. Psellos enjoyed the meeting and blessed Mauropous, for in all his experience of helping people he had never heard such a grateful speech. He expected Mauropous to help the man, and wondered how he would respond, having been amazingly grateful before the event. But the help had better come soon, for he seemed near the end of life; Psellos feared that he had already expended most of his remaining breath on this swan-song.

Date etc.: c.1053–4? There is a strong similarity with the old man of S 173.

Moore 496: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 48; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 13; Karpozilos 1990, 23 n. 73; Ljubarskij 2004, 82; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 98; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 109.

S 41 TO THE KRITES OF ANATOLIKON

Psellos praised the *krites* of Anatolikon, who was not only supremely learned but also supreme in the duties of *philia*. He specially admired how the *krites*, using the language of *philia* and learning its doctrines, did not divide his love among many, like rivers divided into narrow rivulets. He performed the duties of *philia* for others, but swamped Psellos with a whole sea of virtue, and noisily, so that news of his affection was heard at the ends of the earth, opening a broad way for the afflicted to approach Psellos. Person after person announced this *philia*, using Psellos to gain access to the *krites*' favour. Far the loudest was the bishop of Sozopolis, whose voice, otherwise thin, became stentorian when proclaiming their perfect affection as a model for learned men. He was so enthusiastic that Psellos had to stop him for a time so that he could catch his breath, to burst forth again like a blocked pipe with a new stream of words. Psellos was worried that his attitude to them would not gain

adequate reward, and so made a request to the *krites*, as one philosopher to another. He should reflect all the warmth of their *philia* on the bishop, as he had extolled them, respecting him as a senior priest of excellent character and formal manners, and loving him as one who knew how to honour love. The *krites* should treat the affairs of his diocese with strict legality, and sharpen for him the blade of justice (his tongue), ready to respond to insults and attacks, as supportive a judge of his affairs as the bishop was in judging their *philia*. With regular watering, the furrow of the bishop's mind could be made yet more fertile in growing praise and gratitude for them, increasing the yield of justice.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No criteria for dating except use of the network.

Moore 454: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Saradi 1995, 186 n. 99; Kazhdan 1994, 210–11; Ljubarskij 2004, 166.

S 42 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos told the patriarch not to be surprised if their correspondence was intermittent, but only if they were not constantly thinking of each other. If he secured the major premise, he should not demand the minor. But they should not be content with the minor: he would write to the patriarch as often as he could. He informed him that he received the most generous possible treatment from the emperor. His other good fortune was that by combining rhetoric with philosophy he had achieved general acceptance as the leader of both. Thus his reputation was splendid, though the truth was much less so. If in time he could make reality correspond with his reputation, then he could truly give himself the name of philosopher.

Date etc.: undated (excursus 7). The patriarch to whom Psellos introduced himself like this was probably a predecessor of Aimilianos. Psellos' likely reference to his philosophy chair could have been made at any time after 1047.

Moore 248: mss P, A. Hase and Miller 1875, 41–2, 665 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 159; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Ljubarskij 2004, 149–50; Grünbart 2005, 72 n. 78, 251, 356; Papaioannou 2013, 36 n. 29; FLORIS BERNARD.

S 43 TO THE *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos said he ought to be able to write to the *krites* with complete freedom on any subject, because of their kinship tie. But this left him shy and reserved in making requests, so as not to abuse the situation. Yet this did not mean that he should cancel all requests because of pressure on the *krites* to fulfil them. [Unrestrained] freedom would lead to the burdensome and outrageous, while hesitation and reserve would mean that no request made to the *krites* was

troublesome. This lengthy introduction was designed to have the *krites* take all Psellos' requests seriously. The *chrysoteles* of Opsikion had become Psellos' friend, and thus asked to be welcomed by the *krites* with kindness. Psellos knew this would happen naturally; but if the welcome was a little warmer for him than for others, he would know that the request had been successful.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.3). Enthusiastic support of a subordinate concerned with tax suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 90: mss P, L, U, F, A. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 4, 74 n. 5; Limousin 1999, 359 n. 55; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 289 n. 1295; Grünbart 2005, 176 n. 335, 261, 265, 268, 299; Gkoutzioukostas 2007, 67 n. 2.

S 44 TO XIPHILINOS THE MAGISTROS

Psellos praised Xiphilinos' silence, knowing that it resulted from his [newly adopted] monastic hesychasm. But he blamed him for counting correspondence with Psellos himself as inappropriate. Had he not won higher status than this, reaching the same end as Xiphilinos from a different starting-point? His own eloquence did not waste words, but he sometimes spoke and had not completely cancelled the verbal impulse. The mind in itself had no voice with which to communicate, but a soul linked to a body needed verbal as well as non-verbal conversation and address. Total silence meant not speaking to servants or answering questions, too large a dose of wisdom and virtue. Xiphilinos should follow a middle road, not begrudging Psellos a brief, simple letter to be worked up later. He should follow the Cappadocians, whose correspondence was so intense as to cancel the distances between them.

Date etc.: 1053–4, soon after Xiphilinos had reached Mt Olympos (excursus 11). The mss are divided between *magistros* and *maistor* as the title of the *ex-nomophylax*. Neither choice is attractive (presumably this was his title between *nomophylax* and the monastery), but *magistros* is preferable.

Moore 148: mss P, L, U, A, p¹. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 14, 155 n. 23, 166; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Spadaro 1976; Ljubarskij 1978, 49, 52–3, 74; Ljubarskij 2004, 84, 88–9, 118, 252; Grünbart 2005, 218; Papaioannou 2011, 53 n. 33; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 310 n. 15; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 23, 29 n. 1; Jeffreys 2017a, 44 n. 16, 48.

S 45 TO CONSTANTINE, MAGISTROS AND SAKELLARIOS, NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Psellos said that one of Constantine's virtues was strict adherence to plain justice, totally disregarding friendships and family ties. Psellos himself vouched for it. So he was surprised that Constantine sometimes bent the rule: though he was so virtuous and the patriarch's nephew, he let a brother be exploited by a brother, in that one had acquired more and could buy his

brother's portion, while the other was content with his share and wanted no more. Was it (one might jest) because the favoured brother was called Symeon and *notarios of the eidikon*, while the other, the outsider to be excluded, had another name and no link to the *sekretion*? Constantine should not make such decisions. Worse still, by St Peter's question, as a sound branch the man would be cut off and burned with the diseased branch, and condemned with the injured party and lose his good name, though from a Constantinopolitan family of high nobility (and his relation, Psellos admitted). Philosophy is not concerned with external differences. Was Psellos accusing Constantine despite his spotless record and virtuous character? Not at all: he just asked for Symeon to be stopped from crime and his brother to gain due justice.

Date etc.: c.1057 (excursus 10). This *magistros* and *sakellarios* is firmly identified in the text as the nephew of Keroularios. Keroularios is called Constantine's uncle (and not just as an identifier) with no indication that he had died.

Moore 223: mss P, A. Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 70; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 109 n. 11; Bernard 2015, 191 n. 92.

S 46 TO CONSTANTINE, MAGISTROS AND SAKELLARIOS, NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Psellos said he had worked out Constantine's plan: he desired Psellos' texts so fiercely as to completely close his ears to all others. Then, wanting them to flow towards him like water from a spring, he cunningly did not accede at once to Psellos' first requests, so the latter had to remind him, and he could frequently enjoy opening his letters. He congratulated him on the scheme, by which he had Psellos at his mercy; so he was just changing the names in the requests but keeping the ideas the same. Yet they had to be careful. The damned suppliants knew the rules of *philia* better than they did, and a huge crowd came knocking at his door, demanding attention. He could get the better of most of them and persuade them to stop, but not his one (the letter-carrier). Psellos' charm was useless, because the man was a relative—an irrefutable argument. He was caught between the necessities of kinship and extreme *philia*: how could he escape these twin despots? Only Constantine had a complete and comprehensive antidote. But he should not mix it for Psellos: he should make his relative drunk with favours, producing the intoxication how best he could. And he had to think of another reason for Psellos' letters. One suggestion would be praise of Psellos' favourite fish, the *potamios hys*.

Date etc.: c.1057 (excursus 10). This Constantine was probably the nephew of Keroularios, as the addressee of S 45 certainly was. Did Psellos at the end ask him for a fish, or did they discuss the fish sent by Keroularios to Psellos via Constantine, which, the recipient complained, was not as effective as a straightforward gift (see S 160)?

Moore 155: mss P, O, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 63 n. 35; Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 42; Volk 1990, 207 n. 17, 210 n. 28, 224 n. 13; Ljubarskij 2004, 102 n. 46; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 109 n. 12; Papaioannou 2013, 219.

S 47 TO XEROS, PRAITOR OF THRAKESION

Psellos said that Xeros, as a just judge, had arrested a *notarios* (the letter-carrier) and brought him to the theme, to return money exacted illegally. Psellos thought this very harsh. Not all the apostles and prophets were scrupulously just, nor were ancient judges, Xeros' favourites. It must have struck Xeros at once that he had often complained of the same treatment. How had he been caught doing what he condemned in others? The *notarios* was guilty as charged. But Xeros only saw the man before him, ignoring weeping at home, a wife's violent grief, his children's sobbing. Psellos accused him of making the man's home like a conquered city. If he had any thought of saving people from despair, of stopping women and children weeping, of rescuing the man himself from perdition and pleasing God, while obliging Psellos, Xeros should treat the *notarios* as he had often begged God to treat himself in a crisis. And the truth was that most of the money brought to the theme was borrowed from Psellos. He should discharge the man, so he could repay the loan.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Despite the fact that Psellos is financially concerned in the issue, this strong plea for the rights of a *notarios* was probably made in the 1060s. Note that Psellos asks for a decision against strict justice.

Moore 419: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 49–50 (Russian translation); Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7; Duyé 1972, 170 n. 19; Weiss 1973, 57 n. 178, 141 n. 476; Herrin 1975, post 284 no. 22; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Cheynet 1999, 240 n. 35; Ljubarskij 2004, 160–1; Limousin 2008, 73–4.

S 48 TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE DOUKAS

Psellos sent Constantine X three *leukoskaroi* [white fish]. Three was the mystic divine number, while white symbolized Constantine's purity, and the *skaroi* his eloquence and music, since *skaroi* are very eloquent fish. May Constantine be saved by the Trinity and illuminated by the whiteness of his virtues, eloquently speaking of divine subjects.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 375: mss P, L, H, Y, a⁶. Creuzer 1823, 611, ep. 16 (Greek text); Hase and Miller 1875, 60, 147 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 44; Volk 1990, 268 n. 4; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10, 172 n. 304, 241, 284, 291; Chernoglazov 2011, 57 n. 8; Bernard 2014, 280 n. 74; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 49 TO THE KRITES OF PAPHLAGONIA

When Psellos received the *krites'* letter, his usual pain had just disappeared, but he was beginning to suffer from other illnesses. He had at different times been afflicted by many different diseases and symptoms, but he had never felt

so wretched and distressed. The seriousness of the pains that oppressed him before (known to the *krites*) was matched by the length of those that followed. He had recently found relief from the problems and visited the emperor, making proposals to him on issues of concern, none more important than that of the *krites*. But he admitted he had not yet really sung the *krites'* praises to the emperor, preferring to skirmish at a distance before committing to the struggle on his behalf. The *krites* could trust the veracity of his true friend Michael. Having once laid the foundation of true *philia* with him, he would not stop building on it. He made this a determined, manly task not admitting softer, feminine attitudes. He had not gained the *krites'* friendship through others, but gained other friends through him. The *krites* should rest his hopes on Psellos, and if he achieved anything in life the *krites* would be the first to appreciate his strength and power—his best and truest friend.

Date etc.: probably 1064–6 (?) (excursus 15.3). He has his monastic name, dating the letter after 1055. His recognition of the feminine side of his nature suggests a date after 1060, maybe at the end of Constantine X's reign, since he has lost contact with the emperor. But another strand of dating might link this illness with that referred to in KD 177 and KD 228 (1055–6).

Moore 320: mss P, O, A, a². Hase and Miller 1875, 68–9 (Greek text, Latin translation); Volk 1990, 431 nn. 7 and 9 Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 10.

S 50 TO THE KRITES OF MACEDONIA

Psellos assured the *krites* that his virtuous character needed no speech, letters, or anything else to encourage him to behave well, and the *philia* and pressure they implied. That was why Psellos had not before taken the trouble to make a request about the bishop of Panion, knowing that the *krites* would by himself get to know him, and give him the benefit of his generosity and intelligence. Besides, the bishop was a good man, endowed with old-fashioned *philia* and very charming, with a sweet temper and urbane character. He was able to dedicate himself to God but also speak positively to men, and had the talent of dividing his attention equally between the two. It should be no surprise that, having made no request before about the bishop for the reasons given, Psellos now suddenly changed his mind. He had no wish to seem ineffectual, a friend in name only, as in the past, and with the current letter was seeking for the bishop the *krites'* honourable kindness, his willingness to make him a friend, give him special regard, and extend to him more of his judicial power and precise judgement, especially because the request came from Psellos. He asked the *krites* if he had already offered what was requested. He wanted him to tell the bishop he had increased respect for him because of the man who requested it.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). No dating criteria save use of the network.

Moore 187: *mss P, O, A.* Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 100; Kyriazopoulos 1997, 196 n. 703; Limousin 1999, 349 n. 17; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 119 n. 42.

S 51 TO XEROS, PRAITOR OF THRAKESION

Psellos told Xeros that he wanted to write to him regularly, but he found it hard, because Xeros expected every letter to be excellent. Yet his skill was not flawless. Creative writers could not avoid producing work of varying quality, just as two children of the same parents or two paintings by the same hand might be very different, by various criteria. This was true in many fields. But Xeros wanted all Psellos' work to be at the same high standard. Zeus begat Hephaistos as well as Ares, and Psellos was just as inconsistent. What is more, excellence might be more uneven than its opposite: there were ugly sea-nymphs, but no beautiful baby monkeys. Xeros' demands were unreasonable. Quality was not completely dependent on authorial intention, but nature herself sometimes decided times for successful creation or the reverse. Was Psellos a worker and Xeros his employer, or were Psellos' letters themselves recompense for Xeros' work? Perhaps they should call themselves both workers and employers: if so, what work did Xeros do? Maybe he worked by reception, and if he did it well, he might defeat nature and fill Psellos with the creative power to write only good letters.

Date etc.: nw after 1060 (excursuses 15.2 and 16). This exploration of the idea of exchange between writers and readers of letters is much more likely to have been written after 1060 than before it.

Moore 48: *mss P, L.* Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 57 n. 178; Herrin 1975, post 284 no. 22; Ljubarskij 1978, 105; Cutler and Browning 1992, 29–30 (partial English translation); Limousin 1999, 361 n. 65, 362 n. 82; Ljubarskij 2004, 160; Grünbart 2005, 222, 319; Limousin 2008, 73–4; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 69, 219 n. 85.

S 52 TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE [X] DOUKAS

Psellos offered the emperor bread, as to the bread of life and Psellos' god on earth; wine to a true emperor who encouraged gloomy hearts; and fruit to a mortal man, as it is naturally subject to decay. May the emperor live forever, adornment of the world, strength of the realm, and a shining diadem of the empire.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 520: *mss P, L, Y, H.* Creuzer 1823, 620, ep. 27 (Greek text); Hase and Miller 1875, 60 (Greek text, Latin translation); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 106 (Russian translation); Karpozilos 1984, 27 nn. 88–9; Grünbart 2005, 75, 138 n. 10, 257, 287, 288; Chernoglazov 2011, 57 n. 8; Limousin 2014, 164, 169 n. 35.

S 53 TO THE EMPRESS (EUDOKIA)

Christ (wrote Psellos) had bestowed these gifts on the empress: a fruit, as she had the beauty and grace of a flower; wine, as she was the symbol of joy; and bread, as she supported many poor people. She surpassed all womankind in physical and moral beauty.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 371: ms P, L, Y, H. Creuzer 1823, 620, ep. 28 (Greek text); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 106; Karpozilos 1984, 27 nn. 88 and 90; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 11, 181 n. 379, 304; Chernoglazov 2011, 57 n. 8; Limousin 2014, 164, 166, 169 n. 35.

S 54 TO THE MONK SYMEON KENCHRES

Psellos told Symeon his letter pleased him by reporting he was alive, despite rumours he was not. He was less happy over his tonsure. He would welcome it, if it was carefully prepared, but as it happened quickly, he feared it was precipitate and the devil might disrupt his progress. He had no prejudice against the decision, but worried that through inexperience, memories of his former life might cause shipwreck when he was already in spiritual harbours. When enjoying Christ's face and the sweetness of monastic life he might curse himself for not embracing it earlier. Though the path was rough, hopes made it easy and heaven-sent joy made it delightful. Those in the world laboured in darkness for the emperor, monks rejoiced in the light and served God. To speak directly to God, gaze upon him and enjoy brilliant future hopes outweighed the discomfort and unsightly clothing. To serve the earthly emperor, people suffered hardships and long journeys to gain his favour and its rewards: we should willingly endure more for God, whose rewards were much greater. The change must be difficult for Symeon, but he had made his decision in his prime, wealthy, highly respected, and presumably guilty of few sins. His tonsure caused rejoicing in heaven and grief below the earth. He might, with God's aid, be joyful, or suffering affliction, which he could bear as martyrdom. He must not let demons make him despair, for the passage to heaven was a gradual one. By keeping his eyes on the joys and benefits of life with God, he would avoid dangerous thoughts. Psellos greatly admired his friend, who from the height of worldly success and its obsession with fine clothes, now despised such things and wore monastic robes, in preparation for the kingdom of heaven.

Date etc.: probably after 1055. The high valuation of monastic life suggests that Psellos is a monk.

Moore 319: mss P, U, p¹. Ljubarskij 1978, 99; Volk 1990, 25 n. 89, 256 n. 22; Ljubarskij 2004, 152; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 204, 201 n. 22, 217; Papaioannou 2013, 238 n. 13, 239 n. 16; Bernard 2015, 184 n. 42; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

S 55 TO THE KRITES OF OPTIMATON

He wrote to the *krites* about a man who had endured great troubles and suffered great disasters, largely from the slanders of others. Even the *krites* had probably heard. Psellos had often been present by chance as he was tried, and was amazed at the power of really evil men. Indeed, if Psellos had not done something to help him, he would have been completely destroyed by their lies. He had now escaped from the circumstances that trapped him and returned to his native place, and at once rushed to the *krites*, who could save him. He should look on the man kindly and pity him, and relieve him from suffering as far as possible. With his usual justice he should analyse the charges against him and reach the right decision. The man had promised Psellos to enjoy a quiet and simple life, and from now onwards to give no opening to those who wanted to slander him.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The provision to *kritai* of relevant judicial information and advice was characteristic of the network after 1060.

Moore 415: mss P, L. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 356.

 ECSTASY OVER A FISH (4 LETTERS)

Before Psellos lost contact with Michael Keroularios, the patriarch sent him a present, probably in the second half of the decade of 1040. It was a potamios hys ('river pig'), Psellos' favourite fish. He gave refined instructions to his cook, prepared himself at the baths, then ate the fish as planned as his only course, his ascetic tendencies conquered by its bewitching flavour. Later he gave biblical suggestions as to how Keroularios could catch more such fish, still savouring his wonderful meal. Keroularios' next gift was cheese—very good in its way, but nothing like his incomparable fish.

S 56 (= KD 208) To the patriarch Michael Keroularios

Keroularios had sent Psellos a *potamios hys*, the most wonderful of all fishes. This sent him into paroxysms of gratitude and delight in Old Testament terms. Others might enjoy entertainment found in theatres, but his pleasure had reached a climax at the first sight of his beloved fish. He planned how he would enjoy it. First he would go to the baths, thinking of the treat to come. With the petals stripped from a whole rosebush he would cover the surface of the water with white or red. After washing, he would float in the water and contemplate the refined recipe by which the

fish was being prepared. Then, as soon as possible, for he would be hungry, he would set a plain table and sit down to his simple meal, not involving a succession of varied and elaborate dishes but concentrating on his fish, from first to last, in all possible dimensions. He divided it mentally into the different portions of heaven, the sun and moon, morning and evening stars, and different points of the compass. Keroularios the patriarch had sent the fish, so it was not surprising that he connected it with heaven. His letter was written to express thanks.

Date etc.: c.1046–50. There is no sign of the alienation to come between Keroularios and Psellos.

Moore 446: mss P, O. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 85; Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 42; Volk 1990, 129 n. 29, 429 n. 5; Magdalino 1998, 111–12; Ljubarskij 2004, 127, 132; Chernoglazov 2011, 63 n. 18; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19, 10; Jeffreys 2014, 81 n. 10.

S 57 To Michael [Keroularios] the patriarch

He was still in ecstasy about the fish of KD 208, thanking Michael Keroularios who sent it, thinking of it as rounded and fat, almost dancing for joy. As an ascetic, the fish affected him seriously. Perhaps it was a wizard, and charmed the mind as witches were said to bring down the moon, or spells bewitched everything susceptible under heaven. He kept away from anything delicious, but had been defeated only by this fish, hooked in some way. Once his taste buds had been overcome, he felt excited when he saw the fish, gave full information to his cook on the recipe to be used and instructed him precisely how to prepare it. He might be a philosopher in every other area, but in this respect alone he could be found wanting, and the passage of time only increased his desire. Keroularios should instruct his fishermen to cast their nets in the deepest part of the river, to catch a bigger fish—the bigger the better. He hoped the river would not run out of fish or Keroularios stop sending them. He thought finally of hunting Keroularios himself, his delightful bait.

Date etc.: c.1046–50.

Moore 516: ms P, I. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 86; Ljubarskij 2004, 127, 132; Chernoglazov 2011, 63; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19, 194 n. 9; Jeffreys 2014, 81 n. 10.

S 58 To Michael [Keroularios] the patriarch

Psellos again saluted the sweetness of the fish Keroularios had sent him, discussing its ancient and popular names. He described his delight in biblical language, saying it had renewed his appetite, which was blunted by lots of vegetable soup. He ventured a prediction about the future: if his

tongue had achieved so much over the catching of this fish, he was going to repeat the same words, and often. Unless Keroularios reneged on their agreement, this meant that the incomparable fish would again be caught in the nets. If things proved difficult, as proverbs would suggest, he was willing to put up with delay. But if the patriarch used the words spoken by Christ, his great prototype, and instructed his fishermen to cast their nets on the right side of the ship, they would find the fish. God would surely grant this privilege to his patriarch. Psellos ended by mixing a loving cup to share with Keroularios, hoping the patriarch would drink from it in return.

Date etc.: c.1046–50. Had Psellos in some direct or indirect way asked for the fish, making an agreement with the patriarch for its capture?

Moore 518: mss P, U, D, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 2001, 40, 159; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 87; Karpozilos 1984, 23 n. 38; Ljubarskij 2004, 127, 132; Grünbart 2005, 214, 270; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 58; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19, 215 n. 71; Jeffreys 2014, 81 n. 10.

S 59 To Michael [Keroularios] the patriarch

Psellos spoke to Keroularios about variation—in musical instruments, musical modes, or even in pots and pans. Keroularios' gift of cheese was different after the fish, and it was both a natural and a processed commodity, linked with birth. Milk was a secondary product of nature, but Psellos' beloved and revered *potamios hys* was an object of primary creation, before there was decay, eating, or judgement. The two were utterly different and could not be compared. They were rivers with the same source—Keroularios' generosity—but one flowed with gold like the Paktolos, while the other, though it had a silvery glint and rose seasonally like the Nile, was not in any way comparable to the first. He would not betray his fish, but nor would he prove ungrateful towards his benefactor. He would award first prize to the cheese in competition with everything else, but first prize to the fish against the cheese. It was higher than high and more marvellous than marvellous. He asked Keroularios, his spring, to give out grains of sand as well as flecks of gold, for they too had a goldish tinge. When Psellos was tired of the second melody, Keroularios should vary the key to create harmony.

Date etc.: c.1046–50. Addressed in ms A to the same person as the previous letter, i.e. 'To the *sakellarios*', but reference to the fish argues for Keroularios.

Moore 216: mss P, U, A. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40; Ljubarskij 1978, 80; Karpozilos 1984, 24 n. 42; Ljubarskij 2004, 127; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 58; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19; Jeffreys 2014, 81 n. 10.

S 60 (= KD 106) To the *krites* of Optimaton

S 61 TO THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos told the patriarch he had often struggled manfully for him against requests from good people he respected, about Nikolaos, the subject of this letter. He had finally given in. The reason was not their eloquence, which he could allow for, but a combination of common humanity and the patriarch's generous spirit. In contests over goodness, the real winner was the one defeated by the good. If the patriarch gave in to the present letter, he would have won, just as Psellos won against his petitioners. What did all this mean? The monk Nikolaos should be received back into the patriarch's flock: a soul seeking spiritual food should not be excluded. When first punished by the patriarch (as was sometimes necessary), he came as a suppliant to Psellos. Since then he had wandered in exile, not received back at Antioch or anywhere else, since exclusion by the patriarch there meant rejection everywhere. In despair he came asking for Psellos' help, hearing he had real influence in Antioch. If this was true, Psellos asked for his condemnation to be reconsidered and his punishment ended. Justice had been done and Nikolaos was no longer a danger. Psellos, a scientific judge of character, had studied him and could confirm this. Nikolaos should be welcomed kindly, as much as possible like the prodigal son. Any resentful older brothers should be reassured, as in the parable, and any other critics, whatever their grounds, given honest answers based on humanity. He begged him not to dishonour a suppliant he had often honoured over many years, and to demonstrate the excellent traits of character he had shown from the beginning.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (?) (excursuses 7 and 16.2). There is little evidence to confirm or deny identification as Aimilianos. But the exclusion of Nikolaos shows similarities to the case of G 23. KD 204 refers to a Constantinopolitan Nikolaos who suffered from similar exclusion.

Moore 394: mss P, H, p¹. Creuzer 1823, 615–18, ep. 24 (Greek text); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 159; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 519; Ljubarskij 1978, 97, 120; Volk 1990, 279 n. 3; Ljubarskij 2004, 149, 181; Grünbart 2005, 251, 257, 358, 359; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

S 62 To the bishop of Parnasos [see KD 75 and the two following letters]

S 63 To the *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas [see KD 75 and the two following letters]

S 64 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF CORINTH

Psellos complained that his eloquent, virtuous, and much-loved metropolitan of Corinth did not visit him, or even write letters. Was he monopolizing

ancient Athens and listening to voices from there, sailing past Psellos' sirens without even being tied up? Probably not. More likely he had set sail for heaven and forgotten Psellos on the ground. What else had happened to cause his aloofness? There was golden Chrysobalantites, who held you fast when you spoke to him, not by words but by his character. As he left the city, he almost pulled Psellos with him by the lure of his company. This was no fiction: the metropolitan should try him and confirm the truth. This decent man, excellent in his dependable character, had happened to become a tax-collector. That was why he needed Psellos' tongue and the metropolitan's aid. Psellos gave him the present letter, the metropolitan should transport him safe and sound through the sea, cutting through the waters, showing some things and hiding others. His contribution should be archiepiscopal, while Psellos the philosopher should make an indirect request for him.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1 and 16.3). Such enthusiasm in support of a tax collector suggests the 1060s. The letters S 64, S 111, KD 74 and KD 253 appear consecutively in ms. L: Papaioannou 2012a sees them as referring to the same man. Small but significant differences between the man's descriptions in the four letters make me hesitate to agree.

Moore 286: mss P, L, H. Creuzer 1823, 606–7, ep. 9 (Greek text); Hunger 1969–70, 29 n. 86; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

S 65 TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN SEA

Psellos took up in a letter a request made of the *krites* in person in the capital. He introduced a most pious *hegoumenos*, whom he honoured for conspicuous virtue. Psellos had regularly visited the monastery, gaining spiritual improvement from the monks, while the monastery benefited from the protection he gave by all means in his power. His power depended on friends like the *krites* whose offices enabled them to help; the emperor had now given the *krites* a role in treating them well. Aegean Sea contained a few of their estates, which were in danger of being lost as a result of many attacks, if the *krites* did not give them sufficient help to preserve them. He should first build with Psellos a basis of good will, and through him become the monks' saviour and harbour. They had appealed to him, and he was passing them on to the *krites*; he hoped not to be deceived, either in his promise to the monks, or in his *philia* and trust in the *krites*.

Date etc.: nw c.1062–3 (excursuses 2 and 16.4). The monastery was probably Ta Narsou (see p. 55), and the *krites* Nikolaos Skleros: cf. KD 126–7. But see the note on S 25.

Moore 306: ms P. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2; Ahrweiler 1966, 132–3 n. 5; Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Weiss 1973, 149 n. 512; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23, 108 n. 35; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 25, 106; Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 27, 161; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

MICHAEL, KRITES OF KIBYRRAIOTON, IOANNES
THE NOTARIOS AND A SMALL MULE (2 LETTERS)

Two letters sent within a brief period on the same issues.

S 66 To [Michael], *krites* of Kibyrraioton

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Kibyrraioton, bringing news, details of which Michael should preferably hear from eyewitnesses. Michael was a friend and relation, and Psellos would do his duty under those headings, showing admirable constancy and unshakeable *philia*, as events showed. He hoped for thanks, but Michael's happiness and success would be sufficient recompense. He hinted that the emperor might grant leave [or a posting?] in the capital. Ioannes, the letter-carrier, a *notarios* from Kibyrraioton, had praised the *krites'* generosity far and wide, and was now returning to the theme. He should be treated well, being allowed to make a little money for which he would be grateful, so that their tie should be of mutual advantage, and thanks would accrue to Psellos, their respected friend. The mule the *krites* sent was, unfortunately, acceptable only in species and colour, and he returned it.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.4). Support for *notarioi* and discussion of profit to be made in the theme suggest the decade of 1060.

Moore 254: ms P. Ahrweiler 1966, 135 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323; Karpozilos 1984, 28 n. 98; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12; Saradi 1995, 187 n. 100; Cheynet 1999, 234 n. 6; Grünbart 2005, 176 n. 335, 261.

S 67 To [Michael], *krites* of Kibyrraioton

Psellos told the *krites* that Ioannes the wonderful *notarios* was a credit to him (in reality, not just in the framework of recommendation). Michael too was extremely competent in all his activities, as Michael knew and Psellos told anybody who needed to hear. Indeed Ioannes had been praising his *krites* boldly in terms which he could not live up to. He hoped Ioannes would also speak in Kibyrraioton of Psellos' loyal *philia* to the *krites*, which, once he acknowledged the friendship, did not change over time. But he had not told Ioannes what to say, and would add no more to avoid the charge of boasting. The mule was a good colour but too small for Psellos' size—the *krites* should remember this if he thought of repeating the gift. He should keep it himself or give it to someone else.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). See S 66.

Moore 275: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 179 n. 222; Ahrweiler 1966, 135 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323; Karpozilos 1984, 28 n. 99; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12; Grünbart 2005, 257.

S 68 TO THE PATRIARCH [LEICHOODES]

Psellos sent gifts to Constantine Leichoudes as his most affectionate servant: bread, to a most productive soul; three Megarian measures of wine, to a flourishing vine, symbolic grape and worshipper of the Trinity; and fruit, to a mystic, fertile garden of infinite virtue. These were poor gifts, not because of Psellos' penury, but through Leichoudes' poverty, in imitation of one who became poor for the sake of mankind. May the wine be from the life-giving vine and a source of spiritual joy. He referred to Kouzenas as Leichoudes' birthplace, holy as Eden for Psellos. May Leichoudes, his glory and pride, grant greater gifts in this life and receive higher recompense in the next, always remembering Psellos, especially in his prayers.

Date etc.: 1059–63 (excursus 1).

Moore 493: mss P, U, O. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 114, 159; Tatakis 1977, 169 n. 155; Ljubarskij 1978, 56 n. 23; Karpozilos 1984, 26 n. 82, 27 n. 88; Ljubarskij 2004, 92 n. 31; Grünbart 2005, 210, 235; Papaioannou 2006a, 108 n. 38; Papaioannou 2013, 220 n. 87.

S 69 TO THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS I]
KOMNENOS ON CAMPAIGN

[Psellos sent a long, enthusiastic but generalized encomium to Isaakios I on campaign against barbarian enemies, with little information to link it to any particular situation.] He complained that Isaakios' modesty and prudence prevented Psellos from praising his military skills as he should. Isaakios planned the campaign brilliantly, followed all the rules of war with both courage and restraint, and succeeded in restoring the collapsed empire of the Romans, avenging the latest insult. But his refusal to boast of these huge deeds, either publicly or in private letters, kept Psellos' celebrations disappointingly muted. But he was totally astounded by all Isaakios' qualities, and the total victory he won over the barbarian attacker, thinking him superhuman. First, he kept up morale in the capital, then disciplined the army to safeguard civilians, then united factions among the troops, ignoring abusive writings, then divided and defeated the enemy even before fighting. Isaakios treated all this, and the mighty efforts and privations involved, as nothing unusual; Psellos, looking for a general with comparable achievements, could find only Alexander the Great. He described the wild burst of enthusiasm with which he himself greeted news of Isaakios' success, then (as he was on horseback) rode into the city to spread the news far and wide. The whole capital was filled with delight, though disappointed that Isaakios had not sent a general dispatch. Psellos hoped his own letters pleased Isaakios. As for Isaakios' letters to him, they were not only a present delight but a future

glory and heirloom for his family. May God inscribe the emperor in the books of the living and among the apostles.

Date etc.: probably 1058–9, Isaakios' last campaign.

Moore 57: mss P, U, p¹. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 85–9 (Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 73 n. 1; Gautier 1975, 328; Anastasi 1976, 117–20 (Italian translation); Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 9, 143 n. 54, 239, 241, 248, 262, 309; Papaioannou 2012, 191 n. 61; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85, 238 n. 11; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 70 TO THE NOTARIOI OF THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS I] ON CAMPAIGN

The letter is addressed to a leader who is explicitly left anonymous (*proto-notarios* or emperor?) and his chorus of *notarioi*. It presents itself as a humble communication from below, not an authoritative blast from above. It tries to imagine where the army might be, following them up to the summits of high mountains and down into neighbouring valleys. It thought of the cold of the far Scythian north, or other difficult areas on the boundaries of the world, giving their campaign mythical dimensions. It repeatedly calls the *notarioi* blessed, and wonders where they really are. The emperor was visualized as an eagle with various imperial symbols. Several Old Testament names hint at a chosen people making their way to a promised land led by a Joshua-emperor. The end of the letter suggests that it was sent anonymously, with greetings for any recipients who guessed its author.

Date etc.: 1058–9, Isaakios' last campaign.

Moore 495: mss P, U, p¹. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 92; Weiss 1973, 114 n. 376; Grünbart 2005, 296; Jenkins 2006, 149 n. 49; Gkoutzioukostas 2002–3, 77 n. 104.

S 71 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to Ioannes *kaisar*, seeking contact with his friend, who was still hunting on his estates at Choirobakchoi. He would like to be a wild animal, large or small, for Ioannes to hunt and would willingly be wounded—in fact he would present himself to be caught and killed, hunting where he had been hunted, so maybe he might be spared. Ioannes, who was unstoppable like a lion or leopard, should pause and submit himself to reason, taming his wildness by literature, relaxing in meadows of words. Psellos threatened to hunt Ioannes, not with an arrow in his side but through his hearing, charming him through the ears with mystic spells [letters]. He claimed to have hit him already and opened the wound wider to get his message through to his very soul.

Date etc.: c.1068–9 (excursus 6).

Moore 5: mss P, L, Y. Ljubarskij 1978, 71; Volk 1990, 132 n. 12; Ljubarskij 2004, 114; Grünbart 2005, 277; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85.

S 72 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos asked Ioannes for congratulations, since a grandson, a second Psellos, had been born [to his adopted daughter]. He was just like his grandfather, the women at the birth said, probably lying—but he liked the idea. He had seized him and covered him with kisses just after birth while he was still bloody like a warrior. Childbirth was not a significant subject for a philosopher: moreover in such matters Psellos had feminine attitudes, in contrast to the masculinity of his scholarly personality. When his daughter went into labour he almost died, pacing round the room in sympathy with her pain, for he was not made of stone. But he forgot this when the child was born, and in any case he kept back the tears in a philosophical way. This contrasted with the weighty and dignified Ioannes, who (he heard) had burst into lamentations when his daughter-in-law had a difficult birth. Ioannes would now have to face two Pselloi: he should also decide whether it was right to deliver to the emperor [Constantine X, his brother] a letter Psellos had written with the news.

Date etc.: c.1063–4 (excursus 6). Note the hesitant approach to the emperor.

Moore 418: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 111 (Russian translation); Leroy-Molinghen 1969, 300–03 (French translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 72; Macrides 1990, 116 n. 79; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 110 n. 9; Papaioannou 2000, 136–46 (partial English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 115; Walker 2004, 52 n. 7; Papaioannou 2006, 172–3 (English translation); Kaldellis 2007, 218 n. 87; Pitarakis 2009, 174 n. 27; Kaldellis 2011, 654 n. 9; Papaioannou 2013, 207–9 (text and English translation).

S 73 TO THE KRITES OF CHARSIANON

Psellos told the *krites* he was still ill when he received his letter. His habitual pain had gone, replaced by other symptoms which had gradually disappeared, leaving him with no appetite and poor digestion. Since the *krites* left the capital, Psellos had only managed to go to the palace three times to speak to the emperor, and with some difficulty. Winter had now improved his health, and he had decided to go more often. If things were fine and the emperor favourable, he would inform him fully of the *krites*' case. He must realize that all power was concentrated in the hands of the *proedros* and *protovestiarious* [Constantine Leichoudes], the only effective route to the emperor, even for Psellos. Any direct request would be counterproductive: the *krites* should write a very humble letter to Leichoudes, which Psellos would deliver and verbally reinforce as best he could—his duty to help a kinsman. God alone knew the

result. The *krites* had sent Psellos just one letter, with no information from the hospice or anywhere else. He did not know what the *krites* had written to the emperor, and had no message from the letter-carrier, whom he had not even seen. He would do his best, but needed more help.

Date etc.: nw 1057–9, as Leichoudes is not yet patriarch. Leichoudes probably occupied a prominent secular position as *proedros* and *protovestiarios* at times from the reign of Constantine IX till his consecration under Isaakios I. This letter and S 28, maybe showing him at the height of this phase of his career, are probably to be dated near the end of this period.

Moore 158: mss P, O, A. Hase and Miller 1875, 65–6 (Greek text, Latin translation); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 33, 40, 176; Weiss 1973, 96 n. 303; Volk 1990, 433–4; Cheynet 1999, 234 n. 7; Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 291.

S 74 TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE DOUKAS

Psellos wrote to the emperor with a gift of two bunches of grapes full of must. The emperor was to grow (symbolically, for Psellos) not just into a vine, but a tall tree-vine, full of flowers, beauties, and graces.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 443: mss P, L, H, c¹. Creuzer 1823, 611, ep. 17 (Greek text); Hase and Miller 1875, 61 (Greek text, Latin translation); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 106; Karpozilos 1984, 22 n. 22; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 75 TO THE KRITES OF OPTIMATON

Psellos declared his faith in the great power of *philia*, especially when rooted in wise and resourceful souls like that of the *krites*. With this introduction, he asked for help for Basileios Melissenos. Basileios was very noble, intelligent, and extremely brave, but did not have enough to live on—or not without great difficulty and a constant struggle. He had recently suffered an unbearable extraordinary imposition [reading *synone* for *syngome*, with Oikonomides], at which he had nearly fainted and collapsed. Psellos' request was that his burden be lightened. He knew very well how eloquently the *krites* would resist, and so added that for him nothing was hopeless or impossible. If he also helped Basileios by the measure of Psellos' *philia*, the man would be fortunate in his misfortune, having found a master able to defeat the bitterness of fate.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Narration of details of the case suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 392: mss P, L. Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Oikonomides 1996, 71 n. 92 (with a textual proposal); Ljubarskij 2004, 181; Grünbart 2005, 257; ZACHARY CHITWOOD.

S 76 TO THE KRITES OF OPTIMATON

Psellos wrote to the *krites* of Optimaton about a problem reflecting the dominant shamelessness of the times. On one hand the bishops of Alea were trying to drive the people of Lysokraneia from their lands with a determination respecting neither human nor divine authority; on the other the Lysokraneians refused to stop their accusations, despite suffering violence and judicial condemnation. The imperial verdict, proposed by Psellos, again favoured the bishops. If the Lysokraneians now accepted this, all would be well. If not, they would no doubt renew their vain appeals. The *krites*' duty would then be to use his wisdom and power to uphold the law, despite their reluctance [presumably by evicting the Lysokraneians in the most civilized way possible].

Date etc.: nw maybe c.1062 (excursus 16.4). Psellos is making imperial policy in a way very unlikely before 1060. The bishops are presumably in the plural because the incumbent changed during the quarrel. The plural led Riedinger to look beyond the obvious sense of *ἐπίσκοποι* (there is a bishopric of Alea (Alia), probably in Optimaton), translating the word as if *ἐπισκοπῆται*. There is no reason to accept Riedinger's proposal that the letter shows Psellos as a *krites*; on the contrary, he seems to be dominating policy formation from the centre.

Moore 334: mss P, L. Weiss 1973, 59 n. 185; Riedinger 2010, 22 (French translation).

S 77 [TO THE KRITES OF OPSIKION]

Because of his correspondent's *philia* (Psellos claimed), he had acquired another property—the lavra of Megala Kellia on Olympos. He had heard that the income from its little estates was free of tax. But since its agriculture (vineyards and corn) was unencumbered, he had willingly taken on the small but secure revenue from its farms. The lavra had an imperial document to deter every evil intention against it. Whoever the owner chose to send as administrator to the monastery would be entrusted not only with the inhabited buildings but also the fields, or rather with the protection of the latter as well as the former. Psellos now wanted to follow a system like this, and entrust all his monasteries to the *krites*, Kathara, Medikion, and Kellia, splendid names attached to properties which made losses rather than profits, thus making them safe and untouchable by any other hand. If he did not have the *krites* as the local official, he would kiss them all goodbye. If he gained nothing from any of them while *the krites* was looking after them, what hope of profit was there when somebody else was messing around with them?

Date etc.: c.1055–6. Very similar sentiments about the future without the protection of a *krites* of Opsikion are expressed in connection with Zomas (see excursus 8). This *krites* may be Zomas' successor after Psellos left Olympos. For Psellos' three monasteries, see pp. 54–6.

Moore 61: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 44 (partial Russian translation); Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 148 n. 506; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Ljubarskij 1978, 28 n. 24, 102; Ljubarskij 2004, 50 n. 26, 156; Papaioannou 2013, 10 n. 27; Jeffreys 2017a, 49–50, 54–6.

S 78 TO DALASSENOS

Psellos had heard from Lizix of the many gifts Dalassenos had bestowed on him and the great kindness he had shown him. Through Psellos these encomia had been spread everywhere, even to the emperor himself. Psellos had known before that Dalassenos was a good man, but now he knew just how good. If all this was true, and Lizix was a lesser *krites*, unworthy of the office and name of judge, he should tell the emperor nothing about him now, by letter, or in person during a future visit. If he was good, wise, and just, he should inform the emperor in both ways. Dalassenos had completely won over Psellos, who would cheerfully perform any menial service for him. He wished he would gain a reward for his *philia*, and be loved by God as he had loved Lizix.

Date etc.: nw c.1162 (excursus 2). This must be dated not long before the death of Lizix.

Moore 462: mss P, L. Gautier 1978, 87 n. 17; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 114 n. 21; Cheynet 2008, 427 n. 63.

S 79 TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN

Psellos addressed the *krites*, asking him to help the metropolitan of earthquake-ravaged Kyzikos more than others for whom he had approached him. The *krites* would see that the metropolitan was full of holy simplicity, like Psellos' late favourite Xerochoraphites, yet very shrewd, and with dignity and solemnity appropriate to a senior bishop, and so much loved and honoured. If the *krites* thought Psellos a good judge, he need ask no more about the man, believing that he was dear to God. If not, he should test him, and would find that Psellos was not mistaken. He should also not just honour him, but help him as much as possible. His famous metropolitan church had been earlier more or less a ruin, abandoned by the ravages of time. But a year or so ago it was shaken by God, suffering dreadfully from his wrath. It needed constant help for repairs. Psellos was not asking for more aid, only for no cuts. The *krites* had a duty to care for public revenues, but also for essential spiritual values. As well as providing for the fisc, he should do something for the dwellings above, beginning with the church whose metropolitan was this excellent man.

Date etc.: 1064–5, a year or two after the destructive earthquake of September, 1063 (see also excursus 16).

Moore 384: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 115; Grünbart 2005, 360; Jeffreys 2014, 89 n. 31; Jeffreys 2017a, 52 n. 31.

S 80 To the metropolitan of Euchaita [see KD 54 and the four following letters]

S 81 TO THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS I]
KOMNENOS, WHEN HE LEFT ON CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE BARBARIANS

He wrote to Isaakios wishing him long life, offering more than the greeting that even Daniel could use to an evil king [Darius]. He boldly called Isaakios his earthly god, wishing him long life on earth and eternal bliss in heaven—on earth, to save many, in heaven to be rewarded for his deeds and constant good humour on earth. Psellos would probably be far away, having not led the same life or reached the same high virtue. But why be separated from Isaakios on earth? This did not mean flying like a bird to join him, but having the emperor return and condescend to live in the capital with him. Christ came down from heaven to live in Palestine; Constantinople was a better place than Jerusalem, honoured by Isaakios' glory and rule. Isaakios, like Christ, neglected his own to run risks for the good of all, so the capital was now ready to suffer danger for him, more in love with him than before, already welcoming him as victor. Everything necessary he had achieved; anything more looked like rashness. There was plenty of military advice Psellos could give urging caution. The barbarians were cowed and Byzantine subjects encouraged: it was not time for total victory. Isaakios should not act prematurely, or (he warned boldly, beyond flattery) there might be an unexpected reverse. He hoped God would improve things in the capital, which was certainly more peaceful than before. This was Isaakios' doing: the citizens wanted to see him in person, driving the imperial chariot and alighting from it.

Date etc.: 1058–9. Isaakios' last campaign.

Moore 45: mss P, L, p¹. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 81–2 (Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 73 n. 1; Anastasi 1976, 114–15 (Italian translation); Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 9, 241; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 82 TO THE EMPEROR ROMANOS IV DIOGENES,
A LETTER OF CONSOLATION WHEN HIS
EYES WERE CUT OUT

Psellos wrote to Romanos with very honourable vocatives, uncertain whether to mourn him as a most unfortunate man suffering myriad agonies, or to admire him as a great martyr, especially if he remained courageous and grateful to God. Psellos knew of no other innocent man so cruelly punished. But he assured him that all earthly events depend on God's providence and unsleeping eyes, and endurance would bring great rewards. It was bitter to be painfully deprived of sight after many previous sufferings; but he should gratefully enjoy the divine light of salvation already prepared for him, hating the sunlight he had lost. He had become an angel and martyr, his earthly

diadem replaced by a heavenly crown. At the last judgment, he would stand brilliantly at God's right hand, his painful eyes kissed by all the company of heaven and God himself. Remembering this, he should rejoice in his sufferings, as God had found something divine in his humanity and would preserve it invisibly. Above all, Psellos swore that Michael VII was completely innocent, believing he had ensured Romanos' safety before the blinding intervened. He truly heard of it with floods of tears and grief, which still continued. It should console Romanos that his son and emperor mourned his fate. Psellos could not write the letter in blood or tears, but still wrote it, weeping because he failed to stop the terrible event.

Date etc.: summer 1072, between Romanos' blinding and his death on the island of Prote.

Moore 34: mss P, L, K, Y, C, p¹, p², t, a⁷, b. Korydaleus 1625, 121–3 ep. 6 (Greek text); Sathas 1874, xcvi–xcix; Hase and Miller 1875, 49–51, 666 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Rambaud 1877, 277 n. 1; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 124–5 (Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 73 n. 6, 75 n. 1; Weiss 1973, 103 n. 336; Snipes 1981; Maltese 1989, 190 n. 25; Volk 1990, 36 n. 129; Lascaratos and Marketos 1992; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 276 n. 11; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 330 n. 39; Vryonis 2003, 3–18 (English translation 10–11); Grünbart 2005, 72, 138 n. 12, 228; Sarres 2005, 94 nn. 220–2, 205 n. 59, 212 n. 8, 221 nn. 50–1, 414 n. 13; Braounou-Pietsch 2010, 25–39, 40–41 (German translation); Jeffreys 2010, 87; Papaioannou 2013, 12 n. 34; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 83 To Constantine the megas droungarios when he invited him to a wedding [see S 1 and following letters]

S 84 To Constantine the megas droungarios when he invited him to a wedding [see S 1 and following letters]

S 85 TO THE *MEGAS DROUNGARIOS* [CONSTANTINE,
NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS]

Psellos had once given birth to beautiful and wise letters, and Constantine had read and admired them, expecting him to continue. But Psellos felt like the beautiful Lais dedicating her mirror to Aphrodite on seeing the inexorable spread of wrinkles. His spirit was failing, and he was ashamed to thunder under a skin (?), not high in the air, scattering the clouds. Constantine's *philia* was such as to accept his beauty even with wrinkles, but he would not disguise his failing creativity. Creating literature was not like physical birth: once the reproductive organs wore out, they could not recover, but souls could return to their past state in various ways, especially roused by an audience. Psellos still performed well before a big crowd, whatever its mood, and could pick up responses from Constantine, to allow the exchange of pleasure between them. The general effect of his words varied like the seasons, from grim to delightful. But before, he would have written this letter without caring for verbal beauty; now the situation had changed and his offerings were less attractive, he

concentrated on enhancing it, as if selling it, to increase its superficial charm so that Constantine would buy it at any price. Perhaps they should stop these transactions as too dominated by exchange value, but since Constantine had the power and Psellos the eloquence, it was as natural for them to negotiate as for the earth and sky to bargain over rain. Constantine might be really charmed and delighted by the letter, but Psellos was not sure what he got out of the transaction as a writer—probably nothing. Perhaps he was like tortoises, which did not all drink water when thirsty: if one of a group drank, they all felt satisfied.

Date etc.: c.1074–5 (excursuses 10 and 15.2). See also excursus 15.1. Constantine held the position of (*megas*) *droungarios* in the first half of the decade of 1070. S 85 plainly precedes his promotion to *epi ton kriseon*, while S 86, though written soon after, followed the promotion.

Moore 373: mss P, O, V, v⁴. Ljubarskij 1978, 64, 136; Volk 1990, 227 n. 32, 268 n. 4; Ljubarskij 2004, 105, 205; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 285; Bernard 2011a, 9 n. 20, 10 n. 22; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 70, 149 n. 66, 151, 227–8 (text and English translation of a substantial passage); Bernard 2017, 23, 29; Jeffreys 2017, 75; FLORIS BERNARD.

S 86 TO THE *PROTOPROEDROS* AND *EPI TON*
KRISEON [CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF
THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS]

Psellos complained that Constantine seemed not to believe his claim about thirsty tortoises (end of S 85). This was one of many natural phenomena observable but not explicable by conventional means. Magnetism and the double sex of hares were the same, widely known facts which would shock an ignorant audience just as much. Animals, stones, and herbs had secret properties not yet known to all, with complex relationships, individual or common, in different categories, all subject to the first cause, despite their differences. Psellos wished to solve Constantine's problem of incredulity, but could not break the barrier hiding nature's secrets. He could only prepare him with more wonders to avoid future surprises he could not explain. Medicines had amazing properties, especially over memory and conception, known to poets and barren females (list provided). Agriculture too showed good examples (another list). Animals and plants changing from one form to another were very surprising, throwing doubt on the boundaries of species. Other plants took on licentious shapes. Ophthalmology used herbs with marvellous effects, as well as spells (another list). Here he was too near Porphyrios' categories, with scientific discourse of no use to Constantine, who preferred aesthetic language—like Psellos. His favourite work was Philostratos' descriptions of statues, which make stone and bronze flexible and liable to tears. Constantine needed a liquid and perfumed language, hard to sustain over such a range of subjects. Psellos' writing was too rough; but

Constantine must not complain, for it would soon change, as he was as flexible as animals which moved from one species to another.

Date etc.: c.1074–5 (excursus 10). Psellos is replying to a letter from Constantine in which he refused to accept the note on tortoises at the end of S 85. S 85 plainly precedes his promotion to *epi ton kriseon*, while S 86, written soon after, followed promotion.

Moore 190: mss P, M, E, e, a¹, m². Mayer 1911, 27 n. 1; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 182 (partial Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 199 n. 1; Tatakis 1977, 163 n. 129, 175 nn. 191–2; Ljubarskij 1978, 64, 66, 145; Volk 1990, 205 n. 10, 207 n. 17, 209 n. 22, 210 nn. 28 and 33, 212 nn. 38 and 42, 213 n. 50, 214 n. 53, 217 n. 70, 227–35; Ierodiakonou 2002a, 158; Tatakis 2003, 133 n. 134, 144 nn. 197–8; Ljubarskij 2004, 105, 107–8, 216; Angelidi 2005, 235 n. 36; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 285, 356; Mottana 2005, 239; Papaioannou 2006a, 112–13 (partial English translation); Papaioannou 2011, 54 n. 35; Papaioannou 2013, 150–2, 190 n. 86; Bernard 2017, 23.

S 87 TO ALOPOS, PROEDROS AND LOGOTHETES OF THE DROMOS

The first half of Psellos' letter contrasts the complete, constant, and reliable on the one hand and the temporary, partial, and annoying on the other: year-round vs. winter-only rivers, evergreen vs. deciduous trees, the sun in summer vs. winter, sun vs. moon. These are introduced by an image of a bee and honey: the sting puts the bee on the weaker side of the comparison. Alopous, he said, could be on the reliable side, while in fact he was not. Why did he not flow and shine constantly, having so much water and light? Why not send details of his military manoeuvres, with technical vocabulary like that used for Alexander the Great? He should do some real fighting, as well as writing of it. If he was not serving Ares but devoted to Hermes, he was the god of stealing and so of tactics to deceive the enemy. He was not sure what Alopous' achievements were, since only disjointed echoes reached his ears, encouraging but inadequate. Now was the time to write letters to make his own voice heard, in a constant and warlike way.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 29: mss P, U. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 91–2 (partial Russian translation); Guiland 1971, 57; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 284, 323, 352.

S 88 TO BASILEIOS, VESTARCHES AND EPI TOU KANIKLEIOU

Psellos complained that Basileios had not sent a drop, despite promising whole rivers. Those with the army probably left Hermes for complete devotion to Ares. He imagined them forgetting philosophical words and speaking in military commands. Psellos and others who did not know the language

were excluded; were they Hellenes among barbarians or barbarians among Hellenes? Would they ever understand each other again? He could not believe his friend Basileios would change like this, going into a prophetic trance and not communicating. Surely he would not change his language because he crossed a river, climbed a mountain, skirted its foothills, and maybe made a siege-engine, rising proudly above the populace to converse with other higher peoples? They would apologize to each other, as he had risen so high above them, and Psellos withdrew in defeat. But others might say the soldiers did not soar like eagles, but clung like eaglets to the emperor's feathers, depending on him. Psellos would just accuse them of defining *philia* by vision, embracing a friend when present but ignoring him when not. If Basileios expected the same from Psellos, he should realize that he wanted to see his visitors, while Basileios might only want to ask about them. He signed respectfully as *vestes*.

Date etc.: probably 1068, during the first Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV (excursus 9). The signature as *vestes* is inexplicable at that date. Is there a humorous point we can no longer appreciate? Could this sentence have been attracted backwards from the following letter?

Moore 13: mss P, U. Duyé 1972, 175 n. 51, 176 n. 53, 176 n. 57; Weiss 1973, 86 n. 266, 87 n. 271, 115 n. 381; Gautier 1976a, 95 n. 32; Ljubarskij 1978, 60 nn. 29 and 31, 108 n. 89; Ljubarskij 2004, 98 n. 37, 99 n. 41, 165 n. 112; Grünbart 2005, 81 n. 23, 207, 357.

S 89 TO THE *EPI TON DEESEON* LEON, NEPHEW OF THE METROPOLITAN OF PATRA

Psellos complained that Leon did not write, nor give back any of the learned material lent to him, or return the deposit. Though enjoying Psellos' benefits, he did not reciprocate. Even if the loan, the deposit, and all else given him were made non-returnable, leaving just generous teaching, why did he not show gratitude and say something? Psellos longed for any Greek voice. He did not seek a lofty treatise which reworked what Leon had received, like vapours from the earth returned as rain; it would be polite to give it back in the same shape in which he had taken it. Over Psellos' works Leon reacted like many of the younger generation when listening to academic discourse. They were utterly terrified by strange words and other such things. When again they found their voice and got used to the cut and thrust of scientific argument, instead of being impressed they turned to contempt. Even Psellos suffered a parallel experience. This was the situation between them. Leon thought that Psellos' ideas were strange, his vocabulary bizarre, and his tone thunderous. In fact the tone at least was more like a shepherd's pipe. He did not imitate Zeus in blasting Semele, changing from god to man and back, but changed his voice, as it were, from crows to Attic cicadas. He signed respectfully as *vestes*.

Date etc.: c.1047–54. In contrast to S 89, the signature as *vestes* seems appropriate (excursus 9). Psellos is involved in teaching at quite a high level (after 1047?), but there is no sign that he is tonsured.

Moore 208: ms P. Weiss 1973, 86 n. 266, 115 n. 379; Gautier 1976a, 91, 93, 95 n. 32; Ljubarskij 1978, 60 n. 29, 61; Ljubarskij 2004, 98 n. 37, 100, 170 n. 281.

S 90 = Moore ORA.72: Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae* no. 21

S 91 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote to a churchman who devoted himself totally to God, thinking all else redundant and annoying. He wanted to correspond with him, and had dared write once, but now faced a long silence. Speech was the expression of his desire, silence its implementation and fulfilment. If his correspondent, in pondering higher things and meeting God, was still obdurate about this world, Psellos would not trouble him again. But with his mind on God, he might also listen to Psellos. In the first case the letter was not unnecessary, in the second it was not annoying. He cautiously made another point, maybe relevant to himself too. Had the other, seeing spiritual beauty, despised verbal beauty, and cut its link to the famous ineffable harmony, as if in meeting God the nightingale's song was a distraction? If so, before spiritual harmony any verbal music was unpleasing. Psellos could only guess at such abstract harmony, but worked to make harmony in language. He desired to rise higher from physical beauty, but always fell back on the senses. What compromise was possible? The upwards urge was strong, but not irrevocable, as the mind remembered the link with the body, and needed rest. The man should enjoy the varied sights of Psellos' writings, like gardens, then continue the climb. Without condescending to write, he must communicate simply, however he wished—Psellos only needed a word, a gesture, the knowledge that the man was thinking of him.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 478: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 3; Kazhdan 1993, 90; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7 (not S 41); Grünbart 2005, 341; Papaioannou 2013, 194 n. 9; Lauxtermann 2017, 12.

S 92 [TO A SENIOR CHURCHMAN]

What gift might one bring the archbishop worthy of God? God by his nature fills all heaven and earth, while the archbishop, by divine command, despised all the world's goods. Anything offered to either lord seemed unworthy of their great majesty. Yet God humbled himself in the form of a slave and the archbishop, in imitation, adopted a becoming modesty. He should not reject the writer's scanty gifts, as even God did not reject physical oblations and sacrifices. He should respond to them generously, for, as he knew, the giver was not rich but very poor, and had fallen into poverty from great wealth.

Date etc.: undated. The addressee is mentioned (in the text) as a senior churchman, ἀρχιεράρχη, an unusual word in the eleventh century for a patriarch or archbishop. The claim of falling from great wealth to great poverty at the end is surprising for Psellos: is he writing in another's persona? Is the attribution to Psellos wrong?

Moore 195: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 3; Kazhdan 1993, 90; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7 (not S 42); Grünbart 2005, 301; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

S 93 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos swore he often failed with those who brought his correspondent's letters, unable to have them take back his replies. Though he could not help his friends as much as he wished, he never neglected to do his best on their behalf, especially in this case. So whenever he received from him a pleading letter requesting a return to the capital, he at once went to the emperor, and sometimes read the letter, sometimes used his own words to make the case, reminding him of the *krites*' contract: the promised service was complete and the date for advertising [for a replacement] was at hand. Both processes should be finished and the *krites* allowed home. The emperor at first refused, saying it was too hard to find a suitable man for the position, precise and competent in all respects (describing the *krites*). But later he softened a little, showing in practice a willingness for the *krites* to return. He was trying all sensible men, hoping to find one to whom he could entrust the collection of taxes. Psellos was optimistic he would succeed, since he saw many responding to the challenge. The *krites* should cheer up, hoping for a swift return.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursuses 6 and 14). The emperor is a little like Constantine X, but surprisingly decisive. The situation has similarities to that of Zomas (1050s) and Nikolaos Skleros (1060s).

Moore 294: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 41 n. 3; Kazhdan 1993, 91; Ljubarskij 2004, 72 n. 7 (not S 43); Grünbart 2005, 285, 360; Lauxtermann 2017, 102.

S 94 [TO A KRITES(?)]

His correspondent could see that Psellos made frequent and repeated requests of him. This was not so much to please his petitioners as to create a pretext for speaking to him. What was surprising was that Psellos performed for them the role they should play in securing his correspondent's intervention in favour of their petitions. It was Psellos who begged most of them to use him as intermediary and negotiator with his friend. But the latter should not think that Psellos was gratuitously making him work. Those for whom Psellos wrote letters to him were those who only wanted him to give them a kindly glance—which for him was very easy and natural to his character. If the current petitioner received such a glance, he would probably want nothing more. In

some cases something more would be given: but that too could easily be arranged in the framework of favours.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16). The very frequent requests in the context of the network point to a date in the 1060s.

Moore 315: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 120; Ljubarskij 2004, 181; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 204, 201 n. 22, 217, 360.

S 95 [TO THE KRITES OF AEGEAN SEA]

Psellos said he was not from Abydos (despite the proverb), nor from Italy, Athens, Egypt, nor his addressee's Aegean Sea. He was from no city other than Constantinople. But he was appropriated by all families, villages, cities, and nations. Like Homer, he was adopted now by Chios, now by Samos, now by another European or Asian village, and called their founder or guardian saint, by individuals, a whole city or a wider group. He had the power everywhere that governors had in their provinces. To boast a little (over moral goodness, not pride) he was the ruler of rulers. Philosophers used architecture for examples in political rhetoric, as dominating other arts and making rules. Psellos played this role, but with a difference: he did not command, he asked favours, as now from his correspondent for the letter-carrier. The man begged and beseeched him, all but cutting up his child like Pelops, organizing his closest friends for a common supplication. He just wanted Psellos' correspondent to know that Psellos was his friend and wanted something good to happen to him. The message had been given. If he did this for those who did not ask, how could he refuse one who was insistent? The favour seemed trivial, so he agreed at once. If he was wrong, and it was a major issue, his friend should get to know the petitioner and tell him. That was, in fact, the essence of his request.

Date etc.: nw 1060–7 (excursus 16.4). This is the most confident statement of Psellos' power over provincial Byzantium, and the way he used it. It is hard to imagine it made before the reign of Constantine X.

Moore 1: mss P, O. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 174–5; Ahrweiler 1966, 132–3 n. 5; Gautier 1976, 105 n. 23; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Ljubarskij 1978, 106; Volk 1990, 4 n. 4; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 60; Ljubarskij 2004, 161; Grünbart 2005, 220.

S 96 UNADDRESSED

It is said that a bird with a dislocated ankle will try to put salve on the other, healthy leg. Although this popular dictum did not completely apply to Psellos and his correspondent, they were both equally lame with *monoprosopon* tax disease. The other was in greater pain, as his first attack was recent, or rather a small earlier onset had now become a serious affliction. He was unable to resist

the previous bout: how would he survive now (Psellos asked on his behalf), after a battering by constant waves of disease? One of his many consolations should be that others, maybe more valiant than he, had also suffered. Numbers fluctuate historically, and it should be no surprise if they return to the high levels of the past. But none of this would reconcile him to this fresh increase. What could Psellos do, lying as he was on the same bed, enduring the same pain at heart? Should he ignore his own case and try to heal his correspondent's disease? He had a neighbour who really was lame in both legs, but was keen to heal Psellos, who had a problem with his toes. This was a natural parallel: but he feared that, just as his neighbour had no success in bandaging his feet, Psellos was offering his friend false hopes of a cure. But he had to do everything he could on behalf of the *despotes*.

Date etc.: undated. The *despotes* at the end was probably a cleric, maybe a bishop or metropolitan. He might be the correspondent, or maybe his superior, whom Psellos could benefit by helping the correspondent.

Moore 417: mss P, O. Volk 1990, 431–3; Grünbart 2005, 353.

S 97 [TO AN UNNAMED *MAGISTROS*]

Psellos told the *magistros* that when he received a letter from him describing his suffering, he took the only remedial course available to him and passed it on to the emperor. When he heard what the *magistros* had suffered—punishment he had himself ordered—he showed that he shared his pain and complained against it, often saying ‘Ah, Michael’ and adding what Psellos had written [in a previous letter]. A petitioner to an emperor, when he hears such words, makes a deep obeisance and breaks off the petition, in case he seem too insistent and provokes a hostile reaction. Psellos did not spare his own words, but was keeping the *magistros*’ for moments of crisis. He had not asked his correspondent to come to Pylai for healing, and would never do so, but would persist in his original request until God granted it.

Date etc.: 1060–6 (excursus 14). The scene resembles others connected with Constantine X. ‘Michael’ is likely to be Psellos’ monastic name, Constantine X lamenting with his courtier over the absent *magistros*. It is also possible that it is the name of the *magistros* himself, as suggested in the heading of the edition.

Moore 508: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40 n. 53, 176; Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38; Grünbart 2005, 295; Jeffreys 2017, 72 n. 36.

S 98 [TO A *VESTES* (*KRITES*)]

Psellos told a *vestes* not to suppose that the affection and support he showed him when present disappeared when he left; in fact his *philia* increased. But all

the efforts of friends to support friends were bound to seem inadequate in the face of the pressure of events and the emperor's wise attention to duty. Despite this, Psellos was determined to play his part, and believed that the *vestes* would achieve his desire in the near future, and would see the capital and the emperor. As for his grateful *notarios* who handed him the letter, Psellos again requested that he should be forgiven for coming to the capital. The man's mother had often been on the point of death, but each time had revived because of him, wanting to see him before she died. However, if his correspondent thought otherwise, his will and decision should prevail. But he should know that the *notarios* was constantly sending Psellos letters, proclaiming the *vestes'* generosity and praising his sympathetic attitude. Thus he should intensify this approach, to make him still more grateful.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Psellos is writing for a *notarios*, providing family medical reasons for his absence from his theme. There is no reason for this to happen before 1060.

Moore 257: ms P. Hase and Miller 1875, 63–4, 666 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 176; Weiss 1973, 120 n. 403; Volk 1990, 341 n. 6; Grünbart 2005, 199 n. 11, 244.

S 99 [TO A KRITES]

One must, wrote Psellos, help all suppliants as much as possible, especially those once well-to-do, with a high standard of living, yet by God's will now poor and destitute. It was said that they were as much in our hands as we were in God's. A good example was the virtuous ex-*vestes* Michael, who was very rich but shut himself in the very poor monastery of Morocharzanes, which had some estates to feed its monks. But time made its reversals here too, and on the excuse of some klasmatic land, possessions long held by the monastery were confiscated. But as Psellos' learned and virtuous correspondent was now in charge of the matter, the situation would change. In part for justice, in part for Psellos' sake, the monastery of Morocharzanes should be declared inviolate. The *vestes*, as well as the many properties which he had given up, should not lose this last dwelling too, giving the devil power over his soul. God would reward [the *krites*] for his actions.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). This level of judicial information and advice suggest a letter penned in the 1060s.

Moore 379: ms P. Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 180 n. 373, 278, 294; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

S 100 [TO A VESTARCHES (KRITES)]

Psellos asked a *vestarches* to take special care of a young *dioiketes* (tax official), calling him (metaphorically) a young and inexperienced colt in the

hippodrome. He was having his first experience of pulling the chariot of tax, so he needed a precise and skilled driver to direct him from the very start and guide him to the bend. He feared deviations, through inexperience, one way or the other. The *vestarches* should also set his rein, neither loosening the bit to let him behave badly, nor (to push the metaphor to the limit) reining him back tightly and making him favour one side of the mouth or the other; he should not put pressure on him with the pole, but make him stand independently despite the double harness, and tightening and loosening the reins as appropriate.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.3). Psellos asks for protection for a new subordinate—a tax official. This probably means a date in the 1060s. The hippodrome imagery may support the same dating.

Moore 513: ms P. Rambaud 1877, 281 n. 1; Grünbart 2005, 243; Gkoutzioukostas 2007, 78 n. 49.

S 101 UNADDRESSED

The letter Psellos received from his correspondent was sweeter than honeycomb, but not sweet enough on his palate ever to convince him of salvation while he still lived in Constantinople. Moses and the rest, whom the other had offered him as precedents, had received their mandate from God himself, and could use the divine command as justification for their actions. What defence could Psellos offer, when he was not entrusted with a secular office? He would not rest till he freed his feet from the bonds of the capital and rushed to the holy mountain of Olympos.

Date etc.: c.1052–4, before Psellos left as a monk for Olympos (excursus 11). Psellos has no secular office: does this mean he has already left imperial service and been tonsured?

Moore 50: ms P, O. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 55; Gautier 1974, 18 n. 8; Gautier 1975, 329; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 346 (partial French translation); Jeffreys 2016a, [29].

S 102 UNADDRESSED

If Psellos' correspondent had been healthy, he would have received an appropriately long letter. But since Psellos heard that his chronic medical condition had worsened, he would not use his art for a longer text than was necessary, or give free rein to his tongue in an untimely and self-indulgent way. He imitated Isocrates in ornamenting his letter with brevity and simplicity in difficult circumstances. His request was: 'This man from Nicaea is my protégé; take pity on him for my sake.'

Date etc.: undated. The addressee may be a *krites*, but there is no firm evidence.

Moore 119: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 110, 119; Ljubarskij 2004, 168, 180; Grünbart 2005, 356.

S 103 TO NIKEPHORITZES, PRAITOR
OF PELOPONNESOS AND HELLAS

Psellos told Nikephoritzes the bishop of Besaina was poor, from a poor see, but he faced claims he was rich, from a wealthy see. Proof of personal poverty had been convincing, but Nikephoritzes himself was to judge the wealth of the see. The bishop was both fortunate and unfortunate: the emperors and relevant officials differed from him on most points, so if he gained more votes he would have splendidly beaten his betters; if defeated, it was only after fighting against great odds, like Jacob against the angel, and he would suffer for it. He was not a mountain-dweller, far from tax-collectors, but exposed to many of them in the capital. A man wearing many cloaks might avoid a lion's first blows, but with one light cloak he was at the mercy of its claws. Such was the bishop of Besaina: even his one slight garment was disputed. Nikephoritzes, as his Good Samaritan and judge, must intervene before he fell among thieves and suffered irreparable damage. Most of the bishop's opponents were humane, like the emperor. If he had to be tempted like Job, his bones should not be touched. The end of Job's story was not relevant—he must be saved now. Nikephoritzes must empower him against the tax-collectors. Other judges were swayed by bribes or floods of tears, but Nikephoritzes by a noble speech. If this letter came from a beloved source, he should be kind to the bishop; if it was rough and ineffectual, this would be yet another misfortune for him.

Date etc.: nw c.1068 (see also excursus 16.3). Note that even at this date Psellos has an antipathy towards tax-collectors.

Moore 276: ms P. Hase and Miller 1875, 144–5 (Greek text, Latin translation); Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 7; Guiland 1963, 203 n. 37; Herrin 1975, 257 n. 7; Lemerle 1977, 300 n. 109; Ljubarskij 1978, 75, 108, 110; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 132 n. 55; Ljubarskij 2004, 120, 164, 167; Grünbart 2005, 72, 293, 294; Kaldellis 2011, 663 n. 40.

S 104 TO THE EMPEROR [CONSTANTINE X] DOUKAS

Psellos sent four silent fish to the invincible mighty lion Constantine X with his formidable roar, his sole monarch. They were four in number to show his rule over the four regions of the earth, mixed sea- and river-fish, to indicate power over the whole sea and rivers too. They were called whitefish, to show a pure, bloodless origin. They should be eaten by the lion, his cub and the lioness [Constantine, Michael VII and Eudokia]; he asked for 'lioness' to be explained to Eudokia, his supreme benefactor, empress, and (dare he say it?) spiritual niece. This last impudent word Constantine should punish—he who alone stopped Psellos' tongue, or was rather the sole musical delight of his heart.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1). Leaina (Lioness) was the name of several literary prostitutes of late antiquity: hence, presumably, the need to explain the word to Eudokia.

Moore 494: mss P, L, Y, A. Hase and Miller 1875, 61–2, 147 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Ljubarskij 1978, 113; Macrides 1987, 144 n. 22; Ljubarskij 2004, 172; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 105 TO THE VESTARCHES BOURTZES,
AFTER HIS BROTHER DIED

Psellos wrote to Bourtzes on the death of his brother. When Psellos, a mere acquaintance, was so affected by the death, he did not know how to console a brother. He had been stunned as he heard the news, thinking of the important life the devil had snatched, a bulwark of the empire. Each facet of the deceased's appearance, interaction with his friends, and moral character was uniformly good and attractive, and he wondered which to mourn first. Psellos had been the man's brother in all but family, and they had consoled and helped each other in previous crises, though imperial obduracy had restricted the aid he could give. Yet it was easier to console others than oneself. After appropriate weeping, we must meditate, contrasting the body, which came from dust and returned to dust, with the soul and mind, which were eternal. God calls each of us to him in his own time, some before others. By dying in the prime of life, when prosperous and successful, Bourtzes' brother had avoided the unpleasantness of old age. Christ's death without sin made it impossible to claim that death was unfair, making death easy. All the heroes of the bible shared the experience of death. Bourtzes would soon see his brother again in the last days, with an immortal body: he had gone on an expedition, not to barbarian enemies but to God and his angels. Bourtzes should weep as was right, but assuage his grief with ideas like these. These few thoughts were brought by an old friend of Psellos', who earned a pittance by carrying letters.

Date etc.: undated. The identity of the emperor who had been obdurate cannot be determined.

Moore 350: mss P, L, V, p¹, v⁴. Grünbart 2005, 75 n. 101, 217, 244, 245, 257, 292, 302; Sarres 2005, 46 n. 63, 97, 173 n. 18, 193 nn. 16 and 20, 196 n. 29, 205 n. 59, 214 n. 14, 225 n. 69, 230 n. 91, 234 n. 105; Cheynet 2008, 360 nn. 94–7; Papaioannou 2013, 195 n. 11, 214.

S 106 [TO AN OFFICIAL]

Psellos claimed that the desire he felt for his correspondent was too great for a short letter. He could not express his great *philia* by ten tongues in ten mouths, so he preferred to say nothing. But if tested like gold for impurity, nothing unfriendly or cold would be found in him. He knew his correspondent was still the same, guaranteed by his nature to do nothing unfriendly. The bearer of the letter was a relative and protégé of Psellos. His manners would give pleasure in conversation. He asked his correspondent to welcome and assist him, for

Psellos and for his own excellent character, which was esteemed by all. He should not fear ingratitude, for the grateful protégé would trumpet his gratitude to the ends of the earth. So if his correspondent wanted to please his friends and advertise his own role, he should give the man his due: for it was worth honouring a worthy man worthily. Otherwise, life should continue well.

Date etc.: undated. A letter marginal to the definition of the network, though Psellos' recommendation, presumably for employment, reads like a text of the 1060s.

Moore 461: mss P, B, O, K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15; Maltese 1989, 189, I(g).

S 107 TO THE *KRITES* OF KIBYRRAIOTON, WHO BECAME *PROTONOTARIOS OF THE DROMOS*

Psellos claimed to have suffered an unexpected blow over the *krites*. He said he lived among scorpions trying to sting the *krites*, though he was away from the capital. He silenced some, killed others, and persuaded others not to sting. But there was no word from his friend, nothing in his defence. Psellos would not insist on this, as he did not need such advocacy. But what about the rest of their relationship, communication back and forth, explicit and not? It had completely stopped and disappeared. The *krites* must be judged to have abandoned philosophy. He might be calmly reading the letter, wondering what he had done to deserve such criticism. He had in fact broken all the rules, forgetting Psellos, not writing to him and not showing that his old *philia* was intact. He knew the *krites* would defend his role at length, but Psellos loved truth, despising such rhetoric. Why not abandon defence and perform some self-criticism? Replies admitting guilt would bring instant forgiveness, otherwise the accusations would become more serious.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). A letter defining the operation of the network by its breakdown.

Moore 302: ms P. Ahrweiler 1966, 135 n. 2; Ljubarskij 1978, 60 n. 30; Limousin 1999, 358 n. 51, 361 n. 69; Ljubarskij 2004, 99 n. 39; Grünbart 2005, 218.

S 108 TO MACHETARIOS, *DROUNGARIOS* *OF THE VIGLA*

Psellos had been promoted to the dignity of *proedros*. Machetarios attacked the promotion, and this is Psellos' protest at the attack. Much of the letter consists of indignant rhetorical questions, first giving a positive picture of Machetarios, then boasting of the status of Psellos, his victim. Machetarios was intelligent, respectable and, worse still, a friend. Psellos was a philosopher, who had read well, worked supremely hard and become a great expert on every

subject in anybody's curriculum (they are listed). The promotion was a silly, transitory honour. The attack was unthinkable, a good man seeking for trivial reasons to overturn the world's judgement on one generally acknowledged as the first of intellectuals, ignoring many more legitimate targets. Psellos was writing the *Chronographia*, naming many noble men, like his friend the high-minded Machetarios. Would he now change the text to gain revenge? No, however loud and violent the attacks became!

Date etc.: 1057–8. Though the first form of Psellos' philosophical chair from c.1047 involved the word 'proedros', this promotion is almost certainly that given at Isaakios I's accession in 1057. Machetarios' attack will have occurred soon after, followed by this protest from Psellos. It is hard to judge Machetarios' motivation: he may have merely protested over the promotion of a monk to high secular office. As often pointed out, Machetarios does not appear in the *Chronographia* as we have it.

Moore 365: mss P, B. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 23; Gautier 1976a, 96 n. 40; Dakouros 1977, 63 n. 2; Ljubarskij 1978, 30; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 204–5; Volk 1990, 45 n. 3; Angold 1998, 235 n. 58; Chondridou 2002, 117 n. 50; Duffy 2002, 151 n. 43; Karpozilos 2003, 674 n. 15; Ljubarskij 2004, 54; Grünbart 2005, 216, 278; Papaioannou 2013, 12; Jeffreys 2014, 89 n. 33.

S 109 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote that he was delighted to receive a letter from his correspondent in which the Muses could be heard dancing in the words. It was impossible to stop reading, and it attracted him like the voices of the Sirens or the taste of lotus. Any reader of its honeyed words would be bewitched by its magnetic force. Beauty shone forth from every feature of its composition. Its writer should not forbid Psellos to respond, and should himself write more letters whenever someone from that area visited the capital. For the rest, he wished him safe in God's hand.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 153: mss P, K. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 164; Grünbart 2005, 75 n. 102, 79 n. 6, 245; Papaioannou 2013, 176 n. 35, 194 n. 9.

S 110 TO BASILEIOS, MYSTOLEKTES AND KRITES OF CAPPADOCIA

Basileios' letter had begun with extravagant thanks (which were undeserved) and ended with a request for a letter, which Psellos now supplied. His failure to justify Basileios' thanks was due to lack of power, not will. Basileios was trying to overcome Psellos' excuses by a surfeit of praise. Psellos preferred philosophy, which, as a science based on facts, would prevail over an art dealing in words. But he did not just cling to philosophy, leaving rhetoric to

Basileios. He loved both, and some thought him a master of both; but he identified more with philosophy. If Basileios exaggerated the facts as a rhetor, while Psellos tried to get things just right, was the rich theatricality of the former superior to the simple economy of the latter? Far from it. Yet if it came to a fight for Basileios he would get stuck in and overwhelm the emperor with praise of Basileios' virtues, not just charming hearts with his tongue but cutting through iron or worse. Basileios was annoyed that the Cappadocians were disobedient, as they had been since the world began. If they exploited opportunities and changed opinions, it was no surprise, since the most gentle customs had become savage. But the emperor would soon root out the problem, violently, if necessary. Basileios must take it as a challenge: the best charioteer could win the race with half-wild horses. He should not worry about slander, trust his friend Michael (Psellos), but also try to make Psellos' friend Basileios a fit subject for praise.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). The sentences of professional advice, given by one who stresses his access to the emperor, suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 163: mss P, L, U, A. Ljubarskij 1978, 109; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 124 n. 40, 128–9 (partial French translation); Cheynet 1999, 239; Limousin 1999, 351 n. 26, 355 n. 38, 361 n. 70, 362 n. 83; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 172 n. 304, 222, 292; Papaioannou 2012, 182 n. 38; Papaioannou 2013, 34 n. 21.

S 111 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF PATRA

Psellos told the metropolitan that he envied him the wonderful person he was receiving, lost to the capital by jealousy, gained for Patra by a fortunate chance and God's will. Psellos had met many good men, but had seen none superior to this one. He was extremely modest, blushing crimson at every word, not very talkative but with a character showing excellent education. He was unlucky to leave Psellos and friends in the capital, but fortunate to join the metropolitan in Patra. Psellos envied them: the pair would make good company, conversing in an honest way and sharing a sociable meal. But he asked them to remember him, not as an irrelevant savant, but as one with a character like theirs. He gave the metropolitan his best wishes. The letter was a request, but irrelevant, for the metropolitan would carry it out unbidden.

Date etc.: undated. Apparently marginal to the definition of the network. The letters S 64, S 111, KD 74, and KD 253 appear consecutively in ms. L: Papaioannou 2012a sees them as referring to the same man. Small but significant differences between the man's descriptions in the four letters make me hesitate to agree. If Papaioannou is right, the dating should be 'probably 1060–7'.

Moore 166: mss P, L. Grünbart 2005, 68 n. 52, 108 n. 252, 155 n. 165, 303, 321; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Bernard 2017, 56 n. 99.

S 112 TO THE EMPRESS AIKATERINE

Psellos told Aikaterine he needed to see the emperor constantly in the city. He wanted the imperial couple always present, and could not bear it when they were away. As he had no other way of addressing Aikaterine, he consoled himself with writing her letters, which gave the impression of speech. He also sent her his ‘usual monk’, presuming to ask about the emperor’s health, using encomiastic phrases about him, then adding others about the empress. How was she, a woman of royal birth who had married into a greater realm? His inquiry and obeisance were a small recompense for the many favours received from her. He prayed for positive answers from her, and equivalent replies from the emperor, to whom he also owed so much. The emperor should be persuaded to enjoy himself; he had heard he was now absent not for hunting but on administrative business, as appropriate to his character. He wished them long years of successful rule.

Date etc.: 1057–9. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 54: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 89–90 (Russian translation); Gautier 1976a, 96 n. 38; Ljubarskij 1978, 30, 36; Varzos 1984, 44 nn. 24–6; Ljubarskij 2004, 54, 65; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 13, 141 n. 45, 142 n. 52, 181 n. 379, 183 nn. 394 and 401, 184 n. 407, 239, 240, 242, 243, 247, 288, 292; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Papaioannou 2013, 12; Limousin 2014, 166, 168.

S 113 TO THE NEPHEW OF THE EMPEROR
[ISAAKIOS] KOMNENOS [THEODOROS
DOKEIANOS]

Psellos pursued Theodoros [by letter] as he left, loved him with somewhat unrequited *philia*, and, though ignored, did not forget him. He asked how he was, using most flattering vocatives. He was sure Theodoros was enjoying, as he should, all his beloved forms of hunting, on land, in the air, maybe even at sea. Above all, he was enjoying the company of the emperor. Psellos had presumed to send the emperor a brief letter, at Theodoros’ suggestion. If the emperor enjoyed reading it, he would repeat the exercise often; if not, he would hold his tongue.

Date etc.: probably 1058–9, as Isaakios left on his last expedition. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 86: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 90; Ljubarskij 1978, 36; Varzos 1984, 47 n. 5, 59 n. 2, 60 n. 11; Ljubarskij 2004, 65; Grünbart 2005, 288, 293, 353; Jeffreys 2010, 81; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Limousin 2014, 166, 169 n. 31.

A NERVOUS RETURN TO COURT AFTER TONSURE

S 114 To the mystikos

Psellos claimed he remembered the mystikos by a picture he carried in his heart; but the mystikos had forgotten him, having not told him where he was. If their *philia* had been between equals, Psellos would not have accepted separation from him, but would have tracked him and hunted him down, by his own kind of pursuit, the hunting of souls. But on one side was a great emperor [for whom the mystikos performed secretarial duties], and on the other a private person and monk, perhaps unwelcome and undesirable, so that he was ashamed to visit, write, or otherwise give trouble. Had the mystikos not sworn that the emperor enjoyed Psellos' company and letters, he would never have come to the palace. He had written a brief letter [S 115], not clever but charming and sincere, and sent it to the emperor, and would know from the reply whether he liked it. Psellos was told from all directions that the mystikos loved his conversation, speeches and letters. He seemed to have the seed of philosophy, which Psellos hoped he would nurture.

Date etc.: 1054 (excursuses 11 and 13). Psellos is returning to court soon after tonsure.

Moore 509: ms P. Guiland 1968, 284 n. 46; Volk 1990, 30 n. 111; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 336 n. 55; Grünbart 2005, 171 n. 288, 220, 228, 356, 357; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 192 n. 19; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

S 115 To the emperor [Constantine IX] Monomachos

Psellos' letter [described in S 114] extravagantly praised Constantine as his god on earth, compared directly and indirectly with God in heaven. He emphasized the emperor's condescension. The angels were paralleled by the late Zoe, a paragon of her sex, cancelling the sin of Eve, confirming her name by helping Constantine give life to his subjects. Psellos himself was better, with no more headaches. God told him his illness would not kill him, and he rose like Lazarus from his sickbed, despite his doctors' despair. But, forgetting his oaths, he returned to his books, his constant companions, which gave him strength to praise Constantine. Yet he was facing an imaginary Constantine: when could he come to see and hear the emperor himself? Tomorrow? But that was far off, a day like a whole epoch! But with the imaginary Constantine before him he would cope with his longing, hoping to hear some of his *schede*, beautiful, charming, and clear, fresh as spring and sweet as honey. Psellos, of whom all despaired, was raised again by the words of the emperor and of God, 'You will not die now'. He prayed that God repeat this to Constantine himself, without the 'now'. He should die only after many years and generations, resurrected to everlasting life with God and with Zoe, singing 'Holy, holy, holy' with the heavenly host and apostles.

Date etc.: 1054 (excursus 11). By saying that Zoe is alive, Psellos suggests an earlier date for the letter: but in the context of eternity he adopts, I believe he is explicitly setting aside her physical death, using her name to concentrate on everlasting life. The position in the ms. after S 114 and the self-conscious tone confirm that Psellos is returning to court soon after tonsure.

Moore 460: mss P, m¹. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 56–8; Volk 1990, 398 n. 11, 428 n. 2; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 337 n. 56 (partial French translation); Chondridou 2002, 41 n. 27, 193 n. 163, 195 n. 166; Chondridou 2002a, 153 n. 17, 154 n. 21; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 8, 241; Jenkins 2006, 149 n. 52; Papaioannou 2013, 6, 11 n. 28; Limousin 2014, 164; Bernard 2014, 265 n. 42; Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

S 116 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos wrote asking for trivial help for a female suppliant. His excuse for troubling the *krites* over this was that Platonic and other philosophical texts often do not deal with important persons and subjects, for the common could be philosophical. Thus Psellos too was willing to make philosophy about the common people, on any relevant subject. The woman bringing the letter had the advantage of giving him the chance of contact with the *krites*, combining her welfare with benefit for himself. The case would not exalt their *philia* but concerned tax: officials were raking over an old case of *monoprosopon*: having not been paid what was due, they were circling menacingly. This sketch of her problem would be focused by the woman herself. She might be beneath their normal discourse, but his purpose was not just to stamp out the tax issue but to open general negotiations with the *krites*, making the concerns of rural men and women the equivalent of Platonic ideas. In other cases he found writing to relevant persons a burden, but with the *krites* he happily dictated a letter at once, for two reasons: finding a motive to speak with the *krites*, and believing the *krites'* response would not be delayed without good reason. Psellos would not be annoyed if things did not turn out as he expected, knowing the fault would lie in the circumstances, not the friend.

Date etc.: nw 1060–7 (excursuses 15.3 and 16.3). Psellos' gendered statement of social inclusiveness fits best in the context of the 1060s, even though his attitude to tax could belong to any date.

Moore 502: ms P. Ahrweiler 1960, 5–6 n. 7; Oikonomides 1996, 104 nn. 104, 107; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 63, 362 n. 80; Grünbart 2005, 219.

S 117 TO THE GENIKOS [NIKEPHOROS], NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Everything in writing: Psellos said that Nikephoros demanded written replies even to simple greetings in the street, so eager was he for Psellos' letters.

Psellos readily sent them as an unavoidable duty, not doing a favour but paying an outstanding debt. A letter formally marked that he was visiting Nikephoros or sending something. Without it, Nikephoros refused to recognize either possibility. Thus Psellos had to compose one document after another, for Nikephoros as a strict tax-gatherer (*phorologos*)—or better postman (*logophoros*)—for his wide distribution of Psellos' letters. Perhaps Psellos loved what he was complaining about, and he was posturing, not blaming? If springs of water were alive, they would weaken and run out, yet would cheerfully deny any dislike of being used. Psellos too was happy with his flow drawn off into Nikephoros' pots, with no fear it would stop. This was like women's nipples. They needed the mouths of their suckling babies to compress their breasts and have a muscle collect scattered drops of milk into a flow, as is proved when the milk ceases once the baby stops sucking. The system is like digging a well and forcing out the water. Liquid is not stored somewhere separately, but the drops are squeezed out under pressure, just as Psellos squeezed out his letters in drops for those who excavated him. If Nikephoros shovelled, Psellos flowed; if not, he was completely dry. He urged him to keep up the digging; the supply would continue unless he stopped.

Date etc.: nw c.1060–6 (excursuses 15.2 and 15.3). A good exploration of the effect of reception on the writing of letters, with strongly female imagery. These factors confirm the likelihood of a date in the 1060s, as Nikephoros probably reached the office of *genikos* in that decade. This letter, like S 174, was readdressed to Nikephoros from his brother Constantine when a Vienna seal (Mech. 26) was published as showing that Nikephoros held the office of *genikos* (see Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 113).

Moore 243: mss P, U. Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 69; Maltese 1988, 27 no. 5; Volk 1990, 287–8 n. 6; Wassiliou and Seibt 2004, 81 n. 370; Papaioannou 2011, 54 n. 35; Papaioannou 2013, 228–30 (text and English translation of a paragraph); Jeffreys 2017, 74 and n. 43.

S 118 TO PARASPONDYLOS THE *PROTOSYNKELLOS*

Psellos told his intimate friend that his *philia* had not cooled [as apparently alleged by Leon], in fact his memory of Leon was warmer and its flame constantly renewed. He was especially devoted to real friends like Leon, as against others who had proved fickle. He now lived for his friends: as the external man perished, the internal was made new. In all other ways he had been turned to ashes, or rather to stone, like Niobe. Hurricane winds, the icy blast from Thrace, and the hail of events made him a man of stone or ice, motionless and useless for any purpose. His sufferings turned him into a living corpse, an unlamented and unburied burden on the earth. Even his corpse was under cruel attack, his flesh rent by scavenging birds, as justice and punishment for his sins pursued him to the end. He despaired of life. All his faculties were blunted, all his skills lost, and he could do nothing. He lamented in a mixture of biblical and classical terms. He called for mourners, but there were

none, and nobody to console him. Though almost losing his very humanity, he still carried within him an image of Leon, which cooled his suffering, especially when his letters arrived; but he could not address him, till some turn for the better restored his power of speech. He ended with a long list of Leon's virtues, the perfect definition of a friend.

Date etc.: 1055 (excursus 11 and 12). This is a terrible moment, as persecution, surely by the church, sent Psellos into utter despair. At the same time Leon was his one consolation. This is probably after Psellos' tonsure: it reads like flattery, recalling friendship past to promote friendship in the future—and (probably) an office.

Moore 338: mss P, H. Creuzer 1823, 613–15, ep. 23 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 91, 92; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22, 435; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 332–4 (substantial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 142, 143; Grünbart 2005, 80 n. 15, 97 n. 158, 103 n. 212, 118 n. 320, 157 n. 185, 160 n. 204, 201 n. 22, 228, 246, 259, 260, 267, 276, 279, 292, 293, 328, 353, 355; Papaioannou 2010, 19 n. 60; Papaioannou 2013, 186 n. 72; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5.

S 119 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos admitted to a *krites* he did not know if the poor and hopeless petty monk of whom he wrote had a monastery in the *krites*' theme or a small patch of land. His tongue was longer than his assets and he created persecutors and opponents, so Psellos again had recourse to the *krites*' juridical office, asking for his support, not because the man was poor but because he said he was being wronged. If he had created the whole scenario as if on the stage—monastery, monks, unjust oppressors, abusers—and it was all untrue, then the *krites* in his judgement should make an anti-scenario, and tell the authorities to treat his persecutors as non-existent; he should write a shadowy report on the case, that everything was as insubstantial and trivial as a play. But if he did own a dwelling, then the *krites* should intervene on the side of truth and help the wronged old man.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). A letter designed to help the judicial process both for the judge and the plaintiff, making no attempt to fit the case into the framework of epistolary *philia*.

Moore 80: mss P, K. Rambaud 1877, 280 n. 1; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 267, 293; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

S 120 TO [THEODOROS DOKEIANOS], THE NEPHEW OF THE EMPEROR, ON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW

Psellos wrote a conventional letter to console Dokeianos and his family. He had himself known the deceased, who was a good man, and he felt grief, so he could only imagine the much greater suffering of the family that had lost so

important a member. But death was the common lot of humanity at some stage in life, and Christ's own death helped us to come to terms with it. Nothing must stop Dokeianos from doing his duty to Isaakios I, and also consoling his own wife and mother-in-law, first by letter, then in person. Psellos himself (at Dokeianos' request) had begun to inform the imperial women, beginning with the empress and the sebaste (?), and each woman he told helped to support the rest, ending with Dokeianos' mother-in-law and wife, the deceased's wife and daughter. Psellos was pleased to read in Dokeianos' letter of the high opinion Isaakios had of Psellos himself, and wrote to him at once. He admitted he had often sent his man to take treats from the city to Isaakios, uncertain whether this was right, as he did not want to be thought a vain flatterer. He ended with a wish to see them soon safe and sound back in the capital.

Date etc.: 1059, as Isaakios returned from his last expedition. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 349: mss P, L, U, p¹. Varzos 1984, 47 n. 5, 59–60 nn. 2–10, 61 nn. 12–13; Maltese 1988, 27 no. 6; Grünbart 2005, 142 n. 49, 171 n. 292, 220, 357; Sarres 2005, 46 n. 63, 97, 196 n. 29, 205 n. 59, 304 n. 136; Jeffreys 2010, 81; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

S 121 TO THE KRITES OF CHARSIANON

Psellos wrote that he had often wanted to communicate by letter with the *krites*, but had been reluctantly prevented by the lack of appropriate letter-carriers. He was now seizing a good opportunity and a suitable reason, and greeting him. With that he said farewell.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). Dating information could hardly be more scanty.

Moore 71: ms P. Limousin 1999, 358 n. 51; Grünbart 2005, 219.

S 122 [TO A THEMATIC OFFICIAL]

Psellos wrote to an official of his theme claiming that their *philia* was now such as to regard their possessions as common and to make proposals without reserve. He used the letter to suggest the stationing of post-horses at key points neighbouring their theme. He said that emperor's progress was encouraging.

Date etc.: c.1035–42 (excursus 17.1). Psellos identifies with the (unknown) theme rather than the capital. He may be its *krites* writing to a subordinate (Riedinger), or perhaps more likely a junior official writing to his *krites*. The tone is brief and unobtrusive.

Moore 151: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 105 n. 157; Grünbart 2005, 346; Riedinger 2010, 6 (French translation).

S 123 TO CONSTANTINE HIERAX WHEN
HE WAS IN EXILE

Psellos congratulated Constantine Hierax on good letters, giving greetings from exile and a sense of his presence. He had enjoyed pleasure, but also drained to the dregs the cup of unhappiness. Psellos congratulated him on piously bearing his burden, a spiritual path leading to God and the kingdom of heaven. Normal human protests were pointless. God and the emperor should make his long banishment end so he might return to his friends.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 143: mss P, K, B. Grünbart 2005, 228; Sarres 2005, 97, 155, 213 n. 9, 216 n. 26, 245 n. 148; Papaioannou 2013, 214.

S 124 TO EUSTRATIOS CHOIROSPHAKTES, *MAGISTROS*
AND *PROTONOTARIOS OF THE DROMOS*

Psellos wrote to Choirosphaktes [absent on Romanos IV's first expedition in 1068], that he was no longer convinced by the philosophical argument that those united by real *philia* could not be separated, as each carried a self-generated mental image of the other. Though his image of Choirosphaktes was intact, he needed to enjoy him in person with all his senses. Imagination may be a higher power than the senses, but they alone conveyed a friend's true nature. When would he see him for one of their regular discussions, as they attended the emperor together? He was suffering severe withdrawal symptoms, and was desperate for his friend's return. But Eustratios seemed to be about to advance deep into India, not yet satisfied with what had been achieved: he might not be satisfied by all the world's land and sea. Psellos was probably too limited in ambition and too philosophical in moderation; the times demanded multiple and unrestricted initiatives.

Date etc.: nw late in 1068. The army reached Hierapolis (Manbij) in Syria, but would return from there early in 1069.

Moore 229: mss P, O, D. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 119; Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378; Ljubarskij 1978, 60 n. 30; Albini 1987; Maltese 1989, 187, I(c); De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 281 (partial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 98–9 n. 39; Grünbart 2005, 222, 358; Jeffreys 2010, 87; Papaioannou 2013, 186 n. 72.

S 125 TO IOANNES OSTIARIOS, *PROTONOTARIOS*
OF THE DROMOS

Ioannes had addressed Psellos in Attic Greek, while Psellos replied in a plain and simple way. If there had been anything brilliant in his style, it would have

been eliminated by his contact with the boorish and uneducated. However ordinary Psellos' writings, they would of course seem sweeter to Ioannes than Hymettos honey, because of their secure mutual trust since boyhood. Ioannes' declaration (or request) about the supreme Trinity had reached a positive conclusion, most beneficial for Ioannes' companions, and especially for Ioannes himself. The monks, having received permission, addressed many prayers to God for his soul. As for Psellos' regular duty to Ioannes, he had made it crystal clear—but had entrusted it orally to the letter-carrier.

Date etc.: Probably 1054–5. The monks, mentioned without explanation, suggest that Psellos is living in a monastic community, presumably Olympos.

Moore 429: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 62–3, 64 n. 99, 70 n. 106; Guiland 1955, 83 n. 4; Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323; Volk 1990, 201 n. 9; Grünbart 2005, 214, 316; Riedinger 2010, 8–9 (French translation); Jeffreys 2017a, 49.

S 126 [TO AN ARCHBISHOP]

Psellos wrote to a metropolitan, urging continued support for a poor man who found good fortune in the midst of bad. He was an exile who came to the metropolitan's city and found there a saviour, an ideal haven, a bosom of Abraham. From there he was proclaiming to all and sundry the metropolitan's kindness and generosity. A great metropolitan should have unflinching faith in God but flexibility in caring for the masses in this world. Psellos' correspondent had stopped the tears of the man's mother, encouraged his family and made their misfortune happier. He asked him to keep the same spirit, and show the exile that a foreign place could be better than his homeland. If he misbehaved—he could be rather immature—he should be pardoned. Dedication and reliability were rare virtues. Perfection should not be demanded in the immature.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Within the definition of the network, but otherwise undatable.

Moore 161: ms P.

S 127 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos thanked a *krites* for his act of true friendship for him in performing a favour for Ioannes the *notarios*, just as Ioannes was grateful for the complete fulfilment of the request. Ioannes spoke of the *krites* in letters and loudly in person, not only for showing friendship to Psellos but as a paradigm of virtue. He was placed second after Psellos, not because Psellos was better than him, but because Ioannes esteemed Psellos more than his own father. This

experience gave Psellos a deeper understanding of the *krites*, whom he had thought he knew. If the *krites* added to his attempts for Ioannes, it would be a philosophical act, leading to endless improvement. It would also be good for the *notarios* if the *krites* continued with his current policy: for what could improve on perfection?

Date etc.: Nw 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.1). The priming of a virtuous circle, especially for a *notarios*, dates the letter after 1060.

Moore 473: ms P. Weiss 1973, 101 n. 323; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 218.

S 128 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos wrote that the remarkable Euthymios was still there. He, who was hungry yesterday and today, might still be hungry tomorrow, but there was a chance that he might be satisfied. By contrast, Psellos would certainly go hungry, for he was being eaten out of house and home by Euthymios, who enjoyed feasting on others' food. If the *krites*' decision was delayed till tomorrow or later, let Euthymios be entertained by his correspondent [the *krites*?], freeing Psellos a little from a burden he could not bear alone.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). An effective joke, which reveals little sign of a date. It is unclear whether the addressee of the letter is the *krites* whose decision might be delayed.

Moore 159: ms P.

S 129 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos told a *krites* in a letter that he had done his part of the work, petitioning the emperor and other relevant officials, but not all the other details were complete. The *krites*' instructions over taxes in Macedonia had not been cancelled: it had been arranged for him to be helped by the *krites* of Macedonia, as if the latter received the tax involved in his correspondent's instructions. Psellos' understanding of the reason was that the *krites* of Macedonia was about to be replaced and his successor was not yet in post, so that the incoming administration would face a special burden and could undertake nothing more. So the business was unfinished, through no fault of Psellos. He told his correspondent to send a first-rate man to Macedonia immediately to collect the taxes, and to take quick action in his own theme to achieve what he wanted, as periods of office were undecided and unpredictable.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.4). Psellos writes with the authority of knowing imperial policy. The instructions over taxes in Macedonia given to the *krites* are known both to him and Psellos, and so are not spelt out. From the suggestions made by Psellos at the end, the

recipient of this letter was to collect the taxes. It is not plain what new role was to be played by the outgoing *krites* of Macedonia.

Moore 317: ms P. Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 56 nn. 175–6 (German translation with textual conjecture); Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Kyriazopoulos 1997, 196 n. 705; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Kkoutzioukostas 2013, 118 n. 39, 123 n. 75, 124 n. 76.

S 130 [TO A KRITES]

He wrote to a *krites* about a poor nun. She wished to be for ever poor in her holy habit, but not to starve—a terrible way to meet death. She had built out of her own money a tiny monastery, and raised a loan for it, promising the women who became its nuns that they would not starve. But one of those contributing to the loan [name suppressed] refused to make his payment and reneged on the agreement. The *krites* should approach the man calmly and do his best to conciliate him, in the hope that he would not break the arrangement—the preferred solution. But if he refused, the *krites* should set up a fair and equal court against the inequalities of fortune. He hoped that justice would prevail for all concerned.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Such judicial information and advice argues for a date after 1060.

Moore 182: mss P, H. Creuzer 1823, 607, ep. 11 (Greek text); Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Jeffreys 2017a, 57.

S 131 Unaddressed [see KD 146 and the four following letters]

S 132 [TO THE EMPRESS EUDOKIA]

Psellos told the empress that he should have picked fruit from Paradise, pressed wine, and baked bread for her. Or rather he should have brought the tree of life itself for Eudokia, the only food and delight fit for her excellent soul. Since this was impossible, he brought the most beautiful earthly flowers available. These were a gift for the woman who was above all feminine and masculine nature, from her most grateful and sincere servant.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 91: ms P. Karpozilos 1984, 31 n. 141; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 11, 181 n. 379, 360; Limousin 2014, 164, 166, 169 n. 36.

S 133 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos told the *krites* not to be surprised at the number of requests he sent, as this just reflected the number of petitioners who bothered him. The current

letter-carrier was recommended to Psellos by one of the emperor's most influential advisors, who had earnestly begged Psellos to recommend him in turn to the *krites*. In doing this Psellos asked the *krites* to speak to him gently, welcome him kindly, hear his request carefully, help him in any crisis and benefit him where he could. The man seemed to be educated and intelligent; his friendship with Psellos was owed to the man who introduced him. Thus he had two sponsors, and the *krites* would earn the gratitude of both if he got to know him and speak to him, and gave some help when possible.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.4). The sending of a large number of requests to the same network address was probably rare before 1060.

Moore 245: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 110, 120; Ljubarskij 2004, 168, 181; Grünbart 2005, 220.

S 134 [TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA]

The bishop of Korone had long been away from his see, and Psellos asked the *krites* for help in connection with it, so that its estates should not be exposed to attack by neighbours or other avaricious persons. One friendly word would suffice to put all to rights, and a tongue ready to intervene or a hand to act. The *krites* should also be informed that one of the *notarioi* serving the *logothetes* in the capital had forged a report against the bishop and handed it to enemies of his, copying the *logothetes*' signature. Psellos had read this and written about it to the previous *krites*, and probably to his correspondent too. The *krites* should not be deceived, as rumour had it that the forgery had now been admitted.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). The judicial information, especially warning of forgery in the capital, suggests a date after 1060.

Moore 33: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 107–8; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 132 n. 55; Ljubarskij 2004, 164–6; Grünbart 2005, 230, 293.

S 135 [TO THE *KRITES* OF AEGEAN SEA]

Psellos asked the *krites* to take more care of the monastery of Ta Narsou than of his other possessions. This was his small native place within the great city, more significant than other areas. He was born nearby, raised within it, and regularly offered it repayments for his nurture. The monks persuaded themselves he was not only its *charistikarios*, but also its founder. He had not built it, but embellished it when he could. His enhancements were not spectacular, but offerings appropriate to the monks. He asked the *krites* to cooperate with him in an alliance over the monastery, and conduct their ship without storms over the Atlantic [*sic*] Ocean and bring it safe to harbour at Piraeus, if the name of his office meant anything. If not, he should give it unhindered

passage. If possible, he should instruct the winds and waves not to trouble the vessel too much. Thus the *krites* should remain untroubled by anxieties and undisturbed by the waves of events.

Date etc.: probably 1060–2 (excursuses 2 and 16). This may be the same support for his monastery shown in KD 126–7 and S 65, dated to the early 1060s by the Lizix-Skleros pattern. For Ta Narsou see p. 54.

Moore 133: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 45; Zervos 1919, 61–2 n. 1; Joannou 1951, 283 n. 8; Ahrweiler 1967, 25; Weiss 1973, 149 nn. 512 and 514; Seibt 1976, 93–7; Gautier 1976, 106–7 n. 25, 108–9; Gautier 1976a, 90 n. 4; Lemerle 1977, 213 (with French summary); Ljubarskij 1978, 106 n. 86; Volk 1990, 2 n. 2, 4 n. 4, 9 n. 15; Limousin 1999, 357 n. 49, 360 n. 60, 361 n. 76; Chondridou 2002, 159 n. 33; Walker 2004, 66 nn. 38 and 40; Ljubarskij 2004, 162 n. 109; Grünbart 2005, 218; Mottana 2005, 233 n. 10; Limousin 2008, 69; Papaioannou 2013, 4; Bernard 2017, 18 nn. 18–19 and 21; Jeffreys 2017a, 55.

S 136 [TO A KRITES]

He wrote about one of the *krites' notarioi*. The man had been ‘planted in the soil’ of the *krites* by a Dalassene, wife of a *magistros*, plainly the *notarios' sponsor*. Psellos announced his decision to support (‘water’) this seedling, so that he might prosper through the *krites*. He was growing in good soil, for the *krites* was the fairest part of the celestial soul (his own vocabulary), where divine springs flowed. So the man was well served by his natural surroundings, his planter (perhaps) and certainly his irrigator. If all combined, he could not fail to produce a good crop. Psellos now addressed the *krites* in his own idiom and a mannered style based on his ideas, for the rest of the letter. He should not give a completely free rein to his *notarioi*, nor one that was painfully tight. He could relax his initial approach, but not change it. Otherwise, he should loosen and tighten the reins, not allowing the horses to gallop at will all over the fields, nor keeping them standing in the stable. When they ran out of food, as horses run out of forage, he should try them with a different regime, and feed them the gospels: Psellos knew many noblemen who were satisfied with such literary treatment and asked for nothing more. This should be available to all: but the *notarios* in question should enjoy more from the *krites*, as sponsored by a relative and recommended by Psellos.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). The addressee was probably a *krites*, as he employed *notarioi*. The dating is based on the long passage of advice on treating them.

Moore 481: ms P. Weiss 1973, 120 n. 406; Ljubarskij 1978, 167; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 294, 345; Cheynet 2008, 432 n. 75; Bernard 2017, 27.

S 137 [TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE X]

Psellos would have liked to set before his emperor nectar or ambrosia or some other kind of immortal food—or water from the eternal spring or wood of the

tree of life. But since he could not, he sent the best products of this earth: fruit, wine, and bread, the first foods by which mankind was nourished. They were all simple, inexpensive, and unsuitable for imperial majesty, yet right for the enjoyment of a philosophical and modest emperor like Constantine. May his emperor (dare he say, his god) eat of them to achieve good health and long life.

Date etc.: 1059–66 (excursus 1).

Moore 102: mss P, B, H. Creuzer 1823, 613, ep. 22 (Greek text); Hase and Miller 1875, 61, 147, 666 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Karpozilos 1984, 27 n. 88; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 10, 143 n. 54, 242, 255.

S 138 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos wrote to the *krites*, asking him to take care also of the *dynatoi* [those defined in law as powerful] as far as he could, especially those who were weaker. A good example was Patrikios [or a *patrikios*], son of Hikanatissa, who, when he saw the peasant tenants of his monasteries scattered far from the farms to which they were subject, grieved deeply and begged the *krites* (with Psellos) not to transfer them from their monastic tenancies. Though Patrikios was a nobleman from a privileged family, his means were not enough to live in comfort. He was collecting from the sources to which he was entitled a few drops to make life possible; the *krites* should not cut off his channels, but widen them.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). This examination of the democratic instincts of an impoverished nobleman is more at home in Psellos' complex 1060s than before.

Moore 194: ms P. Ahrweiler 1967, 27; Weiss 1973, 150 n. 521 (partial German translation); Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 225; ZACHARY CHITWOOD.

S 139 TO THE PATRIARCH [MICHAEL KEROULARIOS, LESS LIKELY IOANNES XIPHILINOS] WHEN HE CELEBRATED THE LITURGY AT THE CHALKE

Psellos told the patriarch that he was suffering from a mighty ecclesiastical tempest, the patriarch's storm near the patriarch's coast, nearly drowning him. The patriarch surely controlled these winds, and all the most dangerous were attacking him at once. Three violent scourges, the 'inscribed eunuch', the 'bearded comet', and 'the great evil of mockery' (?) had been persecuting Psellos, with other henchmen of the patriarch, and he could not bear it. Even in places where he should be safe, he was under constant attack. Every year (?) he had been robbed, dragged by priestly hands from the sanctuary or butchered in the sanctuary itself. Adam had been convicted for being tricked into stealing one apple, but now a body of priests cut up all the fruits from

paradise and poured them over him. This was not a private sin, but a public crime [syntactically the crime is the synod's, but might it be their judgement of Psellos' actions?]. They had beaten and humiliated him while fulfilling his religious duties. The patriarch should stop this, or find a way to make it bearable. If not, Psellos would still be safe, though it might take time. He would not worry about the perils of the sea, for he would hold on to the patriarch's hand, using him as the divine light to bring him to shore.

Date etc.: 1055 (see excursus 11), describing Psellos' persecution by a church faction and his ordeal before the Synod. It is usually dated to his persecution under Keroularios, where it fits well. Surprisingly in ms w it is addressed to Ioannes Xiphilinos, while in ms P, from which it was published by Sathas, the address is just 'To the patriarch'. It is a generally accepted principle in editing Psellos' letters that more precise addresses should be preferred to more general equivalents, as later copyists lose perspective on the background of the letters, so in principle Xiphilinos should be accepted. But this would demand serious reassessment of Xiphilinos' patriarchate. It is best (with some methodological discomfort) to leave the letter addressed to Keroularios. Perhaps the scribe of ms w knew C 1, showing a less serious level of tension between Psellos and Xiphilinos. The period involved is unclear: the unexpected word *ἐπερείως* suggests a yearly event of persecution, which is hard to interpret. The three opponents are unidentified (unless, as Lauxtermann speculates, the 'bearded comet' is the *comes* Adrianos of Psellos, *Poemata* (ed. Westerink) 62, 44–65.

Moore 35: mss P, w. Guiland 1947, 92 n. 6; Ljubarskij 1978, 80; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 335–6; Ljubarskij 2004, 127; Grünbart 2005, 251; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19; Jeffreys 2017a, 45; MARC LAUXTERMANN.

S 140 [TO A BISHOP]

Psellos wrote to a senior churchman, introducing a monk. He knew his correspondent was a most admirable bishop, but knew nothing of the monk. There were two possibilities—he was good or not. If he was good, meeting the bishop's supreme goodness he would become better still; if he was not, like salty liquid mixed with a much larger quantity of fresh water, he would be changed into sweetness. Whether he had done wrong or (as he claimed) he had been wronged, in both cases he would receive justice. If he set sail from Psellos, as from a convenient harbour, for the bishop's waters, he would easily find his way and reach a most peaceful harbour, sailing with a fair wind on the Black Sea. Such was the bishop's reputation, not gained by eulogy but confirmed by facts. He did not just receive but was truly hospitable to his visitors. Psellos may have sent the monk forth but the bishop would bring him to a timely anchorage, as he entered and left port.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). No dating criteria save use of the network.

Moore 412: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 159; Ljubarskij 1978, 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 150; Grünbart 2005, 254; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 141 [TO THE *KRITES*(?) OF HELLAS
OR KATOTIKA]

Psellos thanked the *krites* for helping Christophoros, his relative. Though the *krites* had not written, Christophoros sent long letters about him from Hellas to the capital. Helper and helped had collaborated in a skilful and ambitious programme of giving benefit and giving thanks. The *krites* should persist in his usual manner, adding to his advantages, and following his own good example. Psellos had made two requests of him, about his relative and the statues. The former was fulfilled, but the latter remained outstanding.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 15.4 and 16.1). The development of the *krites* and his employee into a virtuous circle is more characteristic of the 1060s than before.

Moore 40: ms P. Duyé 1972, 168 n. 9; Ljubarskij 1978, 79 n. 12; Angelidi 1998, 79 n. 12; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 77; Ljubarskij 2004, 164; Papaioannou 2006a, 97 n. 8; Papaioannou 2013, 10.

S 142 [TO A *KRITES*]

Psellos told the *krites* that the *notarios* rejoiced as he got Psellos' letter, as if it gave the same total protection as the shield of Ajax. He at once went into ecstasy, like an Indian mystic. The *krites* would decide if he would remain unwounded, and time would tell. Psellos sent the letter not to guarantee freedom from wounds but to minimize their effect. This would also need protection offered by the *krites*. The *notarios* would be kept by his tie in the capital for a time, though he wanted to follow the *krites* at once, not like Homer's horse galloping towards its mate, but Plato's, starting a race to a higher goal. Psellos was amazed that, though the *krites* was a strict taskmaster who kept the reins very tight, everyone wanted to become his subordinate, sure that they would gain from his wisdom. They were enjoying the flood at the mouth of the Nile; if they knew how deep his wisdom was, they would understand the Ethiopian headwaters as well. He should offer these springs to the *notarios*; to Psellos, all secret springs with intellectual content. Indeed, he had his own streams, drinkable and also (he hoped) beautiful and golden, with which he would liberally reply, responding to the *krites*' single outpouring by flooding him with a whole spring. The water offered by the *krites* would thus not only be undiminished, but flow with greater force.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Thematic *notarioi* hardly appear in the letters before 1060.

Moore 414: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 179 n. 222; Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 167; Grünbart 2005, 218.

A MARRIAGE ALLIANCE PROPOSED TO
ROBERT GUISCARD (2 LETTERS)

These two very similar letters appear to be alternative drafts, the second at a slightly higher linguistic register than the first: they are best summarized together.

S 143 As from the emperor Michael Doukas

Psellos wrote two similar letters for Michael VII, announcing his accession and proposing a marriage alliance to Robert Guiscard. The letters stressed Michael's pacifism, inherited from his father Constantine X, and his wish for alliance and *philia* with likeminded Christian rulers like Guiscard. Thus Michael wished to marry his brother the emperor Konstantios to one of Guiscard's daughters [Helena?], a splendid match for her, as he explained. He reminded Guiscard that Romanos IV too had planned to marry his son to one of Guiscard's daughters—but Romanos was a usurper, removed by God, while Michael VII and Konstantios had dynastic legitimacy. Konstantios was a perfect figure of an emperor, from the same mother and father as Michael VII, not only legitimate but *porphyrogennetos* as well (with a brief essay on the word). The marriage should lead to a regular offensive and defensive alliance. Robert should say how discussions might proceed.

Date etc.: both within a year, c.1072, at the beginning of Michael VII's sole reign.

Moore 492, 405; both mss P, p¹. Sathas 1874a, 206–13 (edition of Greek text with French translation); Vasil'evskij 1875, 276–9 (Russian translation); Eberhard 1877; Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 125; von Heinemann 1894, I 299–301, 393–6; Chalandon 1907, 260–2; Dölger 1925, 1995, no. 990; Charanis 1949; Kolia 1958; Bibicou 1959–60, 56 n. 3; Guiland 1960, 17 n. 78; Oikonomides 1963, 117 n. 56; Kolia 1966; Polemis 1968, 50 n. 10; Weiss 1973, 103 n. 338; McQueen 1986, 429–34; Kolia-Dermitzaki 1997; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 58; Grünbart 2005, 50 n. 118, 144 n. 64, 148 n. 107, 152 n. 145, 264, 288, 294, 326, 327; Papaioannou 2013, 12 n. 34, 251.

S 144 [As from the emperor Michael Doukas] [*Included in the double summary of S 143.*]

S 145 [TO ANDRONIKOS DOUKAS]

Psellos was not surprised that Andronikos had defeated his enemies, but did admire the specialized military skill with which he had worked. He listed technical terms of military formations and manoeuvres of which, apparently, Andronikos showed mastery. While the whole city was in suspense, most

heard divine voices announcing victory in Andronikos' name, showing his place in the plans of heaven. Thus when Andronikos brought the good news, most had already heard it. The dragon's head had been bruised, but he was not destroyed, and had taken refuge in a high nest, with some venom left. There was also a snake, the crafty Khacatur, who was just as dangerous. After all this, when would Andronikos return, so that Psellos could embrace and congratulate him, setting him on a high place in the City and proclaiming his name to the whole world with an Attic eulogy? His memory would live for ever, needing no conscious recall. Psellos would remember him in Hades, if that was possible. Andronikos had no need to advertise his triumph, which spoke for itself; in Psellos' words, he had revived the corpse of the Roman empire.

Date etc.: 1072, spring/summer. Romanos IV had been defeated by Andronikos and Robert Crépin, but had not yet been captured.

Moore 336: mss P, p¹. Hase and Miller 1875, 46–8, 143, 665–6 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 123; Zervos 1919, 73 n. 5; Sideris 1993, 432–6; Grünbart 2005, 32 n. 30, 50 n. 118, 72, 245, 280, 324, 327; ANTHONY KALDELLIS.

S 146 [TO A MAGISTROS (KRITES)]

Psellos' correspondent expressed surprise that he still honoured him [maybe after criticism?]. Psellos replied that he used the language of *philia* with those he hardly knew: how should he not do so with a man he made one of his closest friends and part of his family by an immaterial tie? There was no pretence in any of his promises to his friends, and he would show his role of friend and relative more clearly if circumstances were better. As it was, he would do his best, especially by consoling and encouraging the *magistrissa* (his wife), who was as noble a soul as her husband and devoted to Psellos. She had been ill and in pain, but hurt more by the false rumour about her husband. Psellos' aid and play-acting had been invaluable in her recovery. On legal matters, his advice was to be neither too strict nor too lax, and to judge cases that would benefit the provincials. Psellos praised him to the emperor. As for promotion, the emperor was planning general changes, but put them off whenever someone objected.

Date etc.: nw 1060–7 (excursuses 14 and 16.4). The characterization of the emperor at the end suggests Constantine X, as does the legal advice and Psellos' knowledge of policy. Is this Psellos' son-in-law? He is otherwise called the *vestarches*, even in letters which are late (e.g. KD 268, S 157). It is hard to see how he could be this man with the higher dignity of *magistros* (cf. De Vries-van der Velden 1996a).

Moore 191: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 176; Ahrweiler 1960, 70 n. 4; Weiss 1973, 19 n. 49 (partial German translation), 38 n. 114; Ljubarskij 1978, 108; Volk 1990, 342; Kazhdan 1994, 211; Saradi 1995, 186 n. 96; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 120–2 (French translation), 131; Limousin 1999, 355 n. 38, 361 n. 72; Ljubarskij 2004, 164–5; Grünbart 2005, 220; Papaioannou 2006, 170–1 (English translation).

S 147 [TO THE *KRITES* OF KATOTIKA]

Psellos told the *krites* that there were respectable citizens in his theme, just as there were proverbially some unlucky Macedonians, not all like Philips and Alexanders. The people of Katotika were not all villains, prosecuted in the courts and afraid of fines. One such was Psellos' friend Prokopios, who was apparently rather wealthy, scrupulously just, extremely sensible, and a very good man: these were the reasons for their friendship. If his character were not such, the *krites* would still have to regard his *philia* with Psellos as of equal weight with his negative characteristics. But since all indications were very positive, the man should have the first place in the *krites*' acquaintance, so that he would realize how powerful Psellos was even beyond his immediate circle.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). This letter of recommendation (for employment?) is more likely to have been penned after 1060 than before it.

Moore 522: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 107–8, 119, 120; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 132 n. 55; Limousin 1999, 360 n. 57; Ljubarskij 2004, 164–5, 180, 181.

S 148 To the metropolitan of Madytos [see KD 64 and the three following letters]

S 149 [TO THE *KRITES* OF THRACE]

All (the monasteries of) Mt Ganos petitioned Psellos through their wonderful old *protos*. Psellos asked the *krites* to treat the man with all possible honour, especially if they met, or the *protos* needed aid. The *krites* would be amazed at his character. He should try to help the other monks too in every respect—or, if circumstances did not permit this, he should receive them in a kindly manner and help in at least one way.

Date etc.: nw after 1055 (excursuses 13 and 16). The probable addressee would be the *krites* of Thrace (or Thrace and Macedonia), where Mt Ganos was located.

Moore 288: ms P. Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Külzer 2008, 374 n. 17; Jeffreys 2016a, [30].

S 150 [TO THE MONKS OF A LARGE MONASTERY]

He told the monks [at Mt Ganos?] that their idea of his influence was greater than the power he really possessed. He had to give up politics when he put on the monk's habit; though he returned from the haven of the monastery to the sea of the world, he did not give himself wholly to the waves, but floated lightly on top of them. So he no longer had influence over the emperors to help those

in danger. He was resisting attempts to lure him back to political life, and was of no use in a crisis, as a retired seaman living far from the sea could not help in a shipwreck. So he declined to become their leader and head of their monastery, as unable to offer the protection they wanted. He insisted he had never thought of becoming the head of any group, lay or religious. He would, of course, do all else in his power to help their interests, despite the steady deterioration of affairs. This he promised, but refused any larger role. The fish they sent was worthy of them, blessed not so much because it came from a monastery as from eighty monks.

Date etc.: after 1055, perhaps after 1059: note the plural of ‘emperors’—but they might be consecutive, not simultaneous emperors.

Moore 457: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 46; Ahrweiler 1967, 24; Cheynet 1999, 237 n. 13; Grünbart 2005, 314; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 151 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos told Ioannes not to be puzzled why he only petitioned him in writing. Letters to him were successful because of Ioannes’ receptiveness; after praising Psellos’ words so often, he wanted to continue the policy. If Psellos visited Ioannes frequently, pressed him hard over the legal man who brought the letter and won what he asked, it would be no surprise. But if he made requests only by letter, and the man gained from the emperor all he wanted (and Psellos asked), that would show a wonderful attitude by Ioannes. As Ioannes said, this man thought like a judge and followed strict justice as *kourator*. Ioannes also knew he faced many problems and lost all he owned, as unlucky as a man could be. Psellos added that he had been hungry for some time—bearable for himself, but not for his wife and children—despite being an absolutely first-rate, educated man. His only hope was Ioannes, and he relied on him, with support from Psellos. Ioannes was intelligent and resourceful, with prompt access to his imperial brother. It was time to show compassion and find the man a theme to run, giving guarantees, if needed. He would do an excellent job in the theme, and if there was a chance to increase imperial revenues, he would seize it. This would free him from misfortune—and also Psellos from him. The man had come to Psellos uninvited and could not be shaken off. He attended his classes and clung tightly to him, like the frog he rather resembled.

Dated: c.1063–4 (excursus 6 and 16.5).

Moore 249: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 114; Ahrweiler 1960, 74 n. 5; Duyé 1972, 172 n. 26; Weiss 1973, 38 n. 116–17; Ljubarskij 1978, 70, 72; Magdalino 1994, 94; Saradi 1995, 186 n. 97; Oikonomides 1996, 147 n. 98; Ljubarskij 2004, 113, 117; Grünbart 2005, 277.

S 152 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos asked Ioannes why he was circling, looking for an open gate to slip in and take and hold the citadel of his mind. He had already been caught in a delightful way, submitting himself to Ioannes' control, for his soul to be torn to pieces; for a time he had thought himself invincible. He first explained why he was angry, accusing Ioannes of snubbing him by rudely rushing away, preventing him from attending, or even seeing him as he left the City. But when the impulse to depart passed and good manners returned, Ioannes was troubled by his complete neglect of Psellos. To catch him as he fled before him, Ioannes used novel means, bewitching him with letters, like an Indian snake-charmer. Assyrian wizards scared people in various ways into obedience. Ioannes used the opposite method: calling Psellos 'Brother, friend, soul-mate', he held him by the ears while he swallowed the bait and the hook stuck in his soul. His fire-breathing protests became silence and tame acceptance. There were still cranes and deer; why did Ioannes need him? Were his brother and lovely daughter-in-law not company enough? How many cranes were his babblings worth? If hunted, he would fly up and hide in a cloud. Being an independent animal (especially where tax was concerned), he would decide if he would be caught. There was plenty of game for Ioannes in the city, and also better entertainment for adults and children. If he failed with animals, he could hunt people.

Dated: c.1063–4 (excursus 6).

Moore 456: mss P, B. Ljubarskij 1978, 70; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12, 132 n. 12; Ljubarskij 2004, 113; Grünbart 2005, 75, 277, 289; Papaioannou 2011, 54 n. 35; Papaioannou 2013, 160 n. 90, 249 n. 50.

S 153 TO THE KRITES OF KATOTIKA

Psellos wrote to the *krites* to prepare him for a visit from the monk Elias. Like his biblical namesake Elijah, he had no possessions, but he had failed to follow him through the air to God, because weighed down by his earthly and bodily needs. In fact, as well as supporting himself, he had a mother and a whole tribe of relations to provide for. His constant journeys in all directions were not motivated by curiosity, but by the need to find enough for the family to eat. Plato also made many journeys, but got no benefit, was nearly sold as a slave, and needed to be ransomed. Psellos hoped that the *krites* could help Elias to be more successful, so that his mother and relatives would have something to celebrate.

Dated: nw c.1065–8 (excursus 4).

Moore 70: ms P, L. Zervos 1919, 70 n. 2; Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 78; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 241 (English translation); Dennis 2003, 49 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 124.

S 154 [TO THE *DOUX* OF ANTIOCH?]

This Elias did not fly like the biblical Elijah (said Psellos), but arrived unexpectedly in an improvised way. He might be escaping a Jezebel—he alone would know—but seemed to be running from some terrible Fury to the ends of the earth. He took Psellos' advice on routes and guides, and so had come to Antioch, to see the area and the letter's recipient, its governor. He should be kept for a time, then sent on elsewhere. The *doux* was very busy, and needed the relaxation Elias could bring. Philosophically speaking, there were two extremes of life: the good, represented by monasticism at its best, and the bad, politely called the life of the tavern. Elias covered all points on this spectrum, on a middle path which changed either way as people wished. Musically, he might begin with holy chant, then (if asked) turn to dance music and back, every change made impassively. He wanted to change shapes like the mythical Proteus, but concentrated on basic levels, imitating roaring lions and jumping monkeys. He was a harbour where the depressed could be encouraged... [paragraph damaged by small lacunae]. Psellos had sketched both sides of his nature: it was for the *doux* to examine the details. Had Elias written the letter? This was both true and untrue. He should write a drama with novel elements, and the *doux* should join in the experiment.

Dated: nw c.1064–6 (excursus 4). The *doux* of Antioch addressed in KD 43 and KD 62 was probably Nikephoritizes. If the recipient of this letter was also Nikephoritizes, then he was told twice to expect a visit from Elias (cf. KD 8). Perhaps this first letter was sent to Antioch, but either Elias did not arrive or Nikephoritizes did not meet him, because he was in prison or had been moved. KD 8 (which is briefer) was sent to him in his next posting, in the Peloponnese.

Moore 12: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 74–5, 78; Dennis 2003, 50–1 (English translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 119–20, 124; Todt 2005; Papaioannou 2013, 238 n. 9.

S 155 TO A NEW CONVERT, AS FROM THE EMPEROR
[CONSTANTINE IX] MONOMACHOS

Monomachos had received a letter from a convert who asked for baptism, and replied excitedly. He was charmed by the thoughtfulness and rhetorical complexity of the letter, and filled with unspeakable joy that he would bring to God so wise a soul. He was proud of the coming event, as if himself going through all stages of the ceremony, and was most impatient to see the convert and receive him after baptism; all waking and sleeping hours were spent in anticipation. He went from courtyard to courtyard in the palace, hoping that days of delay might become hours. He had not written, not wanting to disturb his correspondent's devotions. He was excited by reports he had received about him, and worked hard on the arrangements. He knew the patriarch was doing the same, to complete what he missed. The convert's request had

been granted, and all those in the palace with philosophical interests would be present, leading him in a symbolic torchlight procession. The date set was the Sunday after the Feast of the chief apostles, when Christ, after Resurrection, brought mankind back to life—as he would in his case, in a second birth more important than the first. The *proedros* too would join the procession, seeing the importance of an event involving God’s presence and the emperor’s hand. The convert should prepare himself well in the few days that remained.

Date etc.: 1047–54 (excursus 9, n. 21). The mss disagree on the identity of the emperor. The strongest impression left by the letter is its unsophisticated tone, more appropriate to the undisciplined enthusiasm of Monomachos (ms B) than the formality of Isaakios I (ms P). Gautier 1976a decides for Isaakios, apparently relying on identification of the *proedros* as Psellos, after promotion by Isaakios. The problem remains for Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 50. But this is more evidence that Psellos’ first philosophy title was *proedros* (not *hypatos*) *ton philosophon* (cf. M 7). It is not easy at any date to imagine a prominent convert needing baptism writing a fine letter in Greek. Was this a non-Orthodox Christian being rebaptized (*de facto*, if not *de iure*), or was the letter translated for the emperor? Might this have been one of Psellos’ non-Greek students, like Ioannes Italos?

Moore 22: ms P, B, p¹. Gautier 1976a, 96 n. 38; Grünbart 2005, 72, 294, 323; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 50; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 12, 251; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 156 TO THE KAISAR IOANNES DOUKAS

Psellos had not written to Ioannes, though in the past he used all his creative resources in corresponding and conversing with him. He now admitted he had adopted a different policy. He told him frankly the reason for his silence: Ioannes no longer enjoyed his words in the same way, no longer consumed them so avidly. Psellos continued to produce, but Ioannes remained dry, untouched by the flow of words. And it was not the job of a spring to entice a drinker who was not thirsty. Ioannes had left the meadows of the Muses and books, and turned to hunting, abandoning intellectual pursuits for the pursuit of game like boar and crane. Hunting was his very soul, and he should continue it tirelessly, whatever the quarry. Even the bookworm Psellos might enjoy holding a hunting bird on his arm. But Ioannes must not let it absorb him completely; or rather he should hunt Psellos as well, not as a big cat but as a tuneful bird, who filled the glades with sweet music of all kinds from different instruments. He often mentioned Ioannes to the emperor and especially the empress, who (he assured Ioannes) was delighted to hear that he was enjoying life. Even the emperor would sometimes refer to him when reminiscing at table. Ioannes had often called such a life his idea of bliss; he now had it and should enjoy it in peace, for none of them was getting any younger.

Date etc.: c.1070 (excursus 6). The empress is Eudokia and the emperor, to whom Psellos is closer than Ioannes, is Romanos IV. Note that Romanos as emperor had little family life till 1070.

Moore 88: mss P, B. Ljubarskij 1978, 32 n. 35, 70 n. 44, 73; Maltese 1988, 27 no. 7; Plepelits 1989, 4–6; Volk 1990, 132 n. 12; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 292 n. 53; Ljubarskij 2004, 56 n. 39, 113 n. 59, 116; Grünbart 2005, 147 n. 94, 228, 279; Jeffreys 2010, 85; Papaioannou 2011, 48 n. 17, 54 n. 35.

S 157 TO CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE
Patriarch Kerooularios, when
his son, Romanos, was born

So it was a boy! Psellos wondered if Constantine saw him at once, bloodied like a warrior, or waited till the cord was cut and he was cleaned up and swaddled. Psellos sent kisses to mother and father. He would have welcomed news of a girl (what did it matter how the gender turned out—more masculine or more feminine?), but was specially pleased by a boy, especially if he had some physical and mental resemblance to his mother. Psellos wanted to be philosophical about everything, but was sensitive to such physical issues (though not others). He was always delighted with small babies, especially from loving homes. Ancient Persian kings, who delayed bonding with babies in case they died, missed much parental joy. Psellos greatly enjoyed the bath routine of the *vestarches'* children, watching them being held by the midwife in one arm and burped with the other, face up and face down, and scolding the servants and advising them on feeding, bathing, comforting, and wrapping the babies; he felt for them as they were swaddled. People too serious to enjoy such things were unnaturally hard, not philosophers. Psellos divided his time between higher pursuits and chatting with friends. He was happy even to spend time talking in the nursery with the women, choosing appropriate tones for each, discussing problems and sharing emotions, holding and kissing the babies, lifting them high in the air and pulling faces. This added a harmonious note to his character. He hoped Constantine and all his family were well and happy, playing with the children, but holding them tightly when raising them high in the air.

Date etc.: c.1074 (excursuses 10 and 15.3). Constantine's wedding to a noble Georgian attendant of Maria of Alania probably took place soon after the latter's marriage to Michael VII in c.1073 (see S 1 and the following two letters).

Moore 37: ms P, B, K. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 36 n. 46; Zervos 1919, 71 n. 1; Leroy-Molinghen 1969, 302–7 (French translation); Guiland 1971, 21; Ljubarskij 1978, 68; Snipes 1981, 107; Maltese 1988, 27–8, no. 8; Volk 1990, 331 n. 11, 332 n. 21; De Vries-van der Velden 1996a, 111 n. 11, 141–2; Papaioannou 2000, 146 n. 49; Ljubarskij 2004, 111; Kaldellis 2007, 218 n. 87; Pitarakis 2009, 173 n. 25; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 112 n. 24; Papaioannou 2013, 195–200 (text and English translation); Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30, 74 n. 43, 75, 83–4.

S 158 TO THE *KRITES* OF CAPPADOCIA

Psellos recommended some Cappadocian monks who were his friends to the *krites* of Cappadocia. He listed their three advantages, being from the *krites'* theme, dedicated to God and friends of Psellos. This meant respectively that he look after them as an official duty, give them the reverence they were due and be their friend because of an equation: if Psellos and the *krites* were friends,

and the monks were Psellos' friends, the *krites* could work out his relationship to the monks. No more need be said to a wise man, and the link was made. As for the reason why linkage was needed, that was the *krites*' business.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). Use of the network is the only indication of date.

Moore 225: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 98, 120; Ljubarskij 2004, 150, 181; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 159 TO MICHAEL [KEROULARIOS], THE PATRIARCH

Psellos complained to Keroularios that he had deprived him of both original and symbols, the patriarch and the fish he sent. Before he had both, but now he had neither. He failed in attempts to see him, felt excluded and his world had unexpectedly turned upside down. What had he done, or not done, to deserve it? All his skills were turned into handicaps, all his reactions to the situation were misinterpreted and turned against him. Life was totally wretched. There was one easy solution—he could solve his problem by cutting the link. He had often tried it, but was stopped by his memories, which drove him back to the patriarch and soon made him change his mind. And the patriarch had made the apparent brush-off into an art form. By half hiding himself, he attracted Psellos by what he showed and held him by what he concealed. If Psellos had once been driven from his door, he would have despaired of that route and chosen another. But Keroularios played hard to get. Though other facets of his life were going well, Psellos found it stifling to enjoy only a fraction of Keroularios' favour. He could bear clouds often obscuring the sun and moon, but felt terribly insulted not to enjoy a fully available Keroularios. It was vain to try to console himself with excuses and parallels of any kind—biblical prophets, for example, content with partial visions of God. He was thirsty for contact, hungry to embrace him. Forget the fish: Psellos needed Keroularios with his old simple affection.

Date etc.: 1051–4 (excursus 11). This is disfavour, not persecution.

Moore 32: mss P, U, H. Creuzer 1823, 618–19, ep. 25 (Greek text); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 37–8 (partial Russian translation); Tatakis 1977, 172 n. 176; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 82; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 336 (partial French translation); Tatakis 2003, 142 n. 182; Ljubarskij 2004, 126, 129; Grünbart 2005, 251; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19, 238 n. 11.

S 160 TO MICHAEL [KEROULARIOS], THE PATRIARCH

Every perfect gift descends from above. Psellos, to test this, made Keroularios a god in relation to himself (reasonably, because of his perfect patriarchal anointing), while his nephew was closer than Keroularios to Psellos. The nephew too gave, by passing on Keroularios' gifts, but they were less perfect

through his intervention. All Keroularios' gifts were totally perfect, wider in scope and greater in depth. Psellos' happiness was complete, partly from, partly through Keroularios (to be worked out carefully). The fish was no less perfect than the Israelites' manna, thus in a very high category. But he timidly added that an indirect gift, delivered by another's hand, could not justify his happiness, but left a cloud over the sun. Psellos gave several parallels between himself and the 'good' brother of the Prodigal Son, with Keroularios as the father: but he did not labour the point, to avoid giving scope to his persecutors. He wanted no more than the patriarch would give to any scoundrel, but wondered why his gate was shut to him. If he burst in, he would raise prejudices and lose favour to others. He must now forget rivers and fish and hope for the great ocean of the patriarch's mercy. He wanted absolution, though he had not sinned, or had vigorously foresworn his sins. To whom had he been ungrateful? Whom had he wronged? Strangely, while his reputation rose elsewhere, it fell with one who honoured him and all but adopted him earlier.

Date etc.: 1051–4 (excursus 11). Psellos is in disfavour with the patriarch.

Moore 301: mss P, B. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 39; Ljubarskij 1978, 80, 84; Ierodiakonou 2002a, 158; Ljubarskij 2004, 127, 132; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19.

S 161 TO THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS] KOMNENOS

Psellos again addressed Isaakios I with great humility in a letter, because unable to speak to him directly. He had written before with his unworthy advice, at Isaakios' generous suggestion, but now it was time for encomium. He had not heard of victory in the campaign, but calculated that it must have happened. Even if not, it was a great achievement to face danger when all urged caution, to gather a large army, make great plans, organize his men on the march, dealing with morale and provisioning, integrating allies, outmanoeuvring the enemy, and reducing him to impotence. All this meant a great encomium of his generalship and genius, shaming previous emperors. Since Isaakios enjoyed Psellos' works, he continued to speculate on the kind of victory that had been won, describing and ranking three different categories. In victory he must preserve philosophical modesty, avoiding overconfidence—a charge not to be made against Isaakios and his generals, but it might affect his men. A good model was Agesilaos, who was more afraid of peace than the war that preceded it. He apologized for giving such simple advice to a heroic and noble commander. He should hurry back to the City, which was longing for his arrival. And he should not think that he had won the war alone, for his wife (and daughter) had gained the Theotokos' help by long prayerful vigils. Psellos, like his fellow encomiasts, justly praised the God-given prosperity of the whole imperial family, ancestors, wife, daughter, nephews, and their dependents.

Date etc.: probably 1058–9. Isaakios' last campaign. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 475: mss P, L, U, p¹. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 82–4 (partial Russian translation); Anastasi 1976, 115–17 (Italian translation); Varzos 1984, 44 n. 23, 58 n. 2; Maltese 1988, 28 no. 9; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Grünbart 2005, 138 n. 9, 238, 250, 301; Jeffreys 2010, 81; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59; Limousin 2014, 164.

S 162 TO THE MOST HOLY PATRIARCH CONSTANTINE
[LEICHOODES], IN THE PERSON OF THE MAÏSTOR
OF TA DIAKONISSES [SCHOOL]

The maïstor told Leichoudes that his letter was bold but unavoidable: not to write would leave him depressed, yet to write would bring the charge of audacity, even from one as sympathetic as the patriarch. After devoting a lifetime to books and learning, he had gradually reached an undistinguished and painful old age, abused and spurned by all and regarded as useless. His education had brought only derision. The patriarch, to give him some reward for his learning, had put him in charge of a school that was not operating, so he could pass on the lessons he offered to those who wanted them, receiving a pittance in return. This had been little or no use. He had not learned how to bargain, and did very poor business. The worst was that his paternal home being far from the school, he had the daily penance of a long, exhausting walk across the middle of the city, when he was once used to sitting at home and reading. The patriarch had asked why he was sad and pale: he now answered (having not dared before) that his life held no joy, every door of help was shut, and his livelihood was very limited. He pleaded with the patriarch to take pity and act. In larger teaching establishments there was a system of promotion, where a teacher who left was replaced by the next in the hierarchy. He should be saved from extreme poverty and given a position of authority, from which he could move forward to success.

Date etc.: 1059–63: the dates of Leichoudes' patriarchate.

Moore 474: mss P, U, O, A, w. Guglielmino 1974, 442–3; Browning 1975, 7 n. 21; Wolska-Conus 1976, 231 n. 62; Lemerle 1977, 201 n. 15, 230–1 (French summary), 242; Ljubarskij 1978, 80; Maltese 1989, 191 n. 17; Sideras 1994, 143 n. 298; Chondridou 2002, 170 n. 86, 172 n. 89, 210 n. 216; Ljubarskij 2004, 127; Grünbart 2005, 62 n. 27, 249, 250; Papaioannou 2012a, 304 n. 50; Papaioannou 2013, 29 n. 1, 183 n. 63, 251; Bernard 2017, 23.

S 163 TO THE EPI TON OIKEIAKON

Psellos addressed a man who was incomparable in wisdom, knowledge, and *philia* for Psellos himself, but now made a request for a coin, like a small-

minded man asking God for a little garden when he was offering Paradise, or for a few drops when he gave whole springs. What was worse, he did not request, but demanded as a right. His witness was the man referred to, in whose name he testified, a humble man, but a relative. Who could reject the demands of relatives? He knew the *epi ton oikeiakon* had experience of the problem. (Maybe the request was not inappropriate, being philosophical and circumstantial [?] in name, if not in fact.) Relatives, when examined in abstract, are a source of inexhaustible riches; but when reduced to the tangible, they convert their assets, restricting them to shillings and pence. Psellos asked the *epi ton oikeiakon* to see the wealth of meaning to which his poor request had given birth. The poor thing should not be spurned for her poverty but be honoured for the fine children she had borne. In fact, she should be given the coin she deserved.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 87: ms P. Grünbart 2005, 220.

S 164 TO MICHAEL [KEROULARIOS] THE PATRIARCH

Psellos thanked Keroularios for a gift of food, the chief of all other gifts, greeting it in terms of the fairest among women from the Song of Songs. It was gradually revealed as a snake, like that which tricked Adam and Eve with words and appearance, but it was also edible. He admired its appearance. He imagined Keroularios asking if all dishes deserved such superlatives, or just this one, as the gift of a patriarch; he added a list of local specialities. Psellos told Keroularios to enjoy all these rare foods and splendid names, but he would feast on this snake, which would fill his table splendidly. He hoped the patriarch's gifts would continue: not knowing their total, he enjoyed them one at a time.

Date etc.: c.1046–50. The snake is owed to the same patriarchal generosity as the fish of KD 56–9.

Moore 436: mss P, U, I. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40; Browning 1975, 7 n. 23; Ljubarskij 1978, 80; Littlewood 1990, 226; Ljubarskij 2004, 127; Papaioannou 2013, 8 n. 19.

S 165 To the strategos of Abydos [see KD 64 and the three following letters]

S 166 TO A MONK OF OLYMPOS

Psellos told the monk that he had stooped low in his promotion: was he not terrified that he, a trivial pastor, had to do with Psellos, the great giant (as most people thought)? He granted the monk this, but asked him to put away his sling and make use of his shepherd's staff. Both should be deployed, but the sling caused wounds too painful for soft contemporary habits. Thus he should

adopt a milder tone, and follow the majority in most things, so that his general similarity to them would throw into relief his exceptional qualities and steal the show. He told him to fear the throne and footstool. Though made of the cheapest materials, in shape they resembled real seats of power. He asked the *hegoumenos* finally if he was terrified or delighted by his promotion. The former, he hoped. In that case he would be a pastor guided by virtuous fear to greater righteousness.

Date etc.: 1055–7. Psellos had probably met the monk on the mountain.

Moore 409: mss P, L, U, A. Zervos 1919, 71 n. 5; Weiss 1972, 27; Agati 1986, 187–90 (Greek text and Italian translation); Kaldellis 2007, 213 n. 72; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 167 TO THE MONK PHEREBIOS

Pherebios wrote to Psellos complaining of his influence in the palace, apparently suggesting that Pherebios himself should replace him. Psellos wished he had not read his absurd letter: he mistakenly thought it more modest than it was. He only replied to stop shamelessness appearing successful, not for any positive reason over the learned activities that governed his life. Anyone wanting the right to speak his mind in the palace and criticize emperors should be hardworking and of outstanding ability. He needed an almost divine knowledge of the secrets of men and affairs and prescience over the future. Anyone trying to play this role with no trace of such aptitudes must expect ridicule and severe punishment. The special knowledge needed, as qualifications are required for any profession, must be intellectual expertise and spiritual purity. Psellos defined the skills required at a very high level, a lofty standard that few could reach. Pherebios showed no sign of such character or talent: in fact he was reputed to have many of the vices censured by the Fathers. It was unthinkable that he could play the role of Moses or Elijah, after wasting his life like this. This was the man who criticized Psellos for his major role in the palace, and for forcing his way in against the emperors' will. This absurd critic laid claim to education, while committing ridiculous linguistic solecisms: Psellos quoted a few. In place of Pherebios' presumptuous address and signature Psellos signed himself as a monk devoted to God and *hypertimos*, addressing Pherebios with more than a dozen insulting epithets. He claimed no skill in prediction, but foresaw a black future for Pherebios. He finally asked him to admire the quality of his response.

Date etc.: after 1060 (excursus 9). Psellos was made *hypertimos* by Constantine X.

Moore 89: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 61–2; Zervos 1919, 71 n. 5; Anastasi 1974a, 419 nn. 87–9; Dakouros 1977, 64 n. 1, 73 n. 1; Ljubarskij 1978, 100; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Ljubarskij 2004, 154; Grünbart 2005, 131 nn. 417–18, 216, 278, 324, 353; Kaldellis 2007, 213 n. 72; Metzler 2007, 299 n. 78; Jeffreys 2017a, 51.

S 168 TO THE MAÏSTOR OF CHALKOPRATEIA, WHEN
MONEY FROM IMPERIAL LARGESSE WAS SENT TO HIM,
BUT HE DID NOT TAKE IT AS HE ASKED FOR MORE

Psellos wondered if the maïstor's contempt for money was more philosophical than Psellos' own donation of what he had to others. The latter must be honest and philosophical, having no other motivation. The maïstor's reaction was not so clearly right, but clouded with a tinge of falsity. It might be said that it showed not contempt for money, but desire for more, confirmed by his defensive reactions. The money paid was not borrowed, as the maïstor knew, nor a repayment, but a freewill gift at Psellos' initiative. He got no thanks for it, just misunderstanding. A philosopher might demand more if paid in learning, but by seeking more money he was guilty of greed, rousing hostility in the giver. The maïstor refused all the learning without seeking its source, and when money was paid he disputed the sum and protested as if given nothing. His attitude to the gift was not philosophical, but showed avarice by focussing on what was missing. This would be logical if the payment were regular, but as it was arbitrary, why not accept it? Did he want to return to all the apparatus of ancient education? He was obsessed by the idea that while all teachers drew from one of the sources of money, with the other source each had a set share. If Psellos had given him none of his money, he would have borne it, but after getting something he complained it was not enough, just as rain was bad in winter but pleasant in summer. For philosophical teachers, money was less important than learning. If the maïstor chose philosophy, Psellos would teach him its secrets; if greed, he should go to Etna and take gold from the correct vent. As his appetite seemed dependent on gold, he must avoid the wrong vent, which would prove empty. In that case he would have to show his philosophy by deeds, not words.

Date etc.: undated. Papaioannou 2012a points out that S 172, S 189, and S 168, appearing in this sequence in ms. B, all begin with the same phrase.

Moore 345: mss P, B. Zervos 1919, 89 n. 3; Tovar 1969, 225 n. 14; Weiss 1973, 72–5 nn. 218–25 (substantial German translation); Browning 1975, 7 nn. 22 and 23; Gautier 1975, 328; Wolska-Conus 1976, 231 nn. 57–9, 61; Lemerle 1977, 225–7 (French summary); Volk 1990, 205 n. 3; Chondridou 2002, 167 n. 70, 209 nn. 214–15; Grünbart 2005, 218; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 60; Papaioannou 2013, 29 n. 1; Bernard 2014, 211 n. 7; Bernard 2017, 23; Lauxtermann 2017, 20.

S 169 TO EPIPHANIOS PHILARETOS, *PROTOASEKRETIS*

Psellos wrote to Epiphanius Philaretos, encouraging him to keep up a correspondence with him, as Psellos still had contact with the sages of the past. Greek-speakers of their day had lost the Panathenaia or Panellenia, and none

of them was a Pericles or Themistocles, while the barbarians were lucky, since a stream of fresh water, as it were, was overcoming their saltiness; but the pure Arethusa was still unwed, as the stream had not yet mingled with hers. There should have been some use of a natural drug to open up the Hellenic springs to modern ears. Perhaps Epiphanius had heard some echo of Psellos' work in this connection, and this might be some solution to his problems. Epiphanius was a novice in the secrets of the imperial court whom Psellos had also counselled at difficult moments in the past and would do so again. He advised Epiphanius to be careful in taking sides, to avoid being swayed by passing opinions or making himself open to every influence, standing consistently like a rock against the ocean. Such a solid position would prevent him from suffering damage at court—or at least minimize any problem.

Date etc.: undated. Epiphanius had probably written a first letter to Psellos regretting the lack of contemporary understanding of ancient Greek wisdom, and the fact that barbarians were as wise as us—an undefined first-person plural, probably meaning Greek-speakers of the eleventh century. Thus he set the rather unusual parameters for Psellos' reply.

Moore 217: mss P, U. Weiss 1973, 115 n. 378; Gautier 1976a, 92; Maltese 1988, 28 no. 10; Kaldellis 2007, 220 n. 92, 222 n. 97; Grünbart 2005, 220; Riedinger 2010, 14–15 (French translation with a textual proposal); Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 103 nn. 199–201.

S 170 TO KONTOSTEPHANOS, NEPHEW OF THE EMPEROR [ISAAKIOS I]

Psellos told Kontostephanos that he had not written before in case his letters would be unwelcome, but now his old friend Joseph had persuaded him. Joseph, a great supporter of Kontostephanos, claimed that the latter often expressed admiration of Psellos' writing and would welcome a letter. Thus he wrote, aware of his correspondent's modest character and practical skills, having heard Isaakios I reading his letters. He was amazed at his intelligence and wisdom, now confirmed by brief personal contact—in fact he admired similar qualities in the entire imperial family, beginning with Isaakios himself as prototype. Isaakios was fortunate in the powerful support of both his nephews, Dokeianos who defended him close by and Kontostephanos the *magistros* and *mezas doux*, who fought further away, supporting an emperor who delighted in their help. Yet he was never seen to relax his intense struggle on behalf of the empire. Psellos every day he worked with him was always amazed at his dedication. He was now a great military commander and also an expert in political affairs, with all the requisite skills. Kontostephanos should praise him everywhere, and write to Psellos in his military way. As for [Joseph] who had brought them together, he should be made Kontostephanos' close friend, as he was a great admirer of his; he was also a friend of Psellos and learned like Psellos himself.

Date etc.: 1057–9. Papaioannou 2012a points out that seven letters addressed to members of the court of Isaakios I are grouped together in ms. L: KD 156, S 161, S 120, S 170, S 6, S 112, and S 113.

Moore 77: mss P, L, U. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 90–1; Varzos 1984, 47 n. 5, 59 n. 2, 59–60 n. 6, 60 n. 11; Grünbart 2005, 72, 108 n. 254, 141 n. 39, 172 n. 304, 218, 238, 259, 264, 278, 285, 291, 301, 303, 318, 325; Cheynet 2008, 203 n. 26; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 59.

S 171 TO IASITES

[This long letter's meaning (let alone its full subtlety) is hard to convey with a conventional summary, which would often degenerate into nonsense. The following brief interpretive essay may be more helpful.] The vernacular Greek word 'horse' (*alagon*) coincides with an adjective meaning 'irrational', and both include the stem *log-* 'utterance', which is applied to this letter. Psellos used these and several other cognate words to thank Iasites elegantly for a mule he hoped his friend was about to give him [skating over differences between mule and horse]. At the same time, by skilful weaving of concepts including the nature of exchange and the role of the horse in metaphors concerning the soul, he added intangible value to the letter he was writing. He thus reinforced theories of gift- and letter-exchange, so that he could claim that the exchange of a literary letter for a mule would bring Iasites great profit. He wondered why other animals were not called 'irrational', but just the horse. He ended by describing the mule he wanted, hoping it would not be too irrational, as he was a poor rider.

Date etc.: 1065–70. Iasites is otherwise attested for that period, and the genre of letters describing literature as an exchange between writer and reader (excursus 15.1) generally appears after 1060.

Moore 16: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 40; Gautier 1976a, 94 n. 26; Karpozilos 1984, 28 n. 97; Volk 1990, 268 n. 4; Grünbart 2005, 220, 282; Bernard 2011, 134–48 (English translation of most of the letter); Bernard 2011a, 8 n. 17; Papaioannou 2013, 46 n. 69; Bernard 2012, 39 nn. 8–9; Bernard 2014, 324; FLORIS BERNARD.

S 172 TO CHASANES, VESTARCHES AND KRITES OF MACEDONIA

Psellos did not know if he bought favours from Chasanes or sold him literature, though they plainly made an exchange. Chasanes got literature from Psellos, Psellos things from Chasanes. But Psellos did not know whether in this transaction he bought, sold, or did neither, nor which of them got the better bargain, Homeric gold or bronze. Chasanes might claim his side as gold, for if literature was weightless, he won by definition, as what he gave in return was solid gold, like his excellent recent tax collection. But was Psellos' side bronze? The two metals were not opposites: maybe literature was more valuable

than gold, making the outcome doubtful. Perhaps Psellos' best products were golden or like the sun. Literature might be gold-like, but not solid gold. What is like gold is less than gold, giving the victory to Chasanes. But think of the connotations: gold meant tribute, tax, debt, and other mean words. Literature was linked with mind, intelligence, and intellectual life. Enough of this. Psellos introduced a tax collector from the Black Sea, rich and noble, despite his dress. He wanted to live and work if possible near home. Psellos asked the favour, leaving the result to Chasanes. Had Psellos censured Chasanes for sending many gifts but neglecting the philosopher? Certainly not. He had praised Chasanes for generosity to a friend, and for replying correctly: to the philosopher in quality and the *proedros* in quantity, as each desired. He asked not to be censured himself if he sent nothing equal to Chasanes' gifts and good opinion.

Date etc.: c.1060–6 (see excursuses 5, 15.1 and 16.3). Chasanes' biography, the genre of letters describing literature as an exchange and the recommendation of a tax-collector support this dating. Moore explains that the letter in ms P is acephalic, but B gives the whole letter. It is plain that there is only one letter here. Papaioannou 2012a points out that S 172, S 189, and S 168, appearing in this sequence in ms. B, all begin with the same phrase.

Moore 11, 348: mss P, B. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 55 (partial Russian translation); Ahrweiler 1960, 71 n. 2; Duyé 1972, 170 n. 21; Weiss 1973, 120 n. 402; Gautier 1976a, 96 n. 38; Ljubarskij 1978, 109; Volk 1990, 256 n. 22; Kyriazopoulos 1997, 196 nn. 701 and 704; Limousin 1999, 358 n. 51; Ljubarskij 2004, 166; Cheynet 2008, 639 n. 75, Bernard 2011a, 8 n. 18; Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 60; Gkoutzioukostas 2013, 117 n. 25, 124 n. 83; Bernard 2014, 324–5; Bernard 2017, 32 n. 84; Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30.

S 173 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Psellos wrote to Mauropous about an elderly man. He was not trying to help the man with this request, but seeking an excuse for a letter to his friend. Anyone applying for kindly treatment from Mauropous would gain it, by the combination of Psellos' wish and his friend's character. Why should one make frequent repetitions in requests to Mauropous? One word and it was all arranged. The man would get what he wanted. As for Psellos and Mauropous, the latter was unfortunate yet also fortunate, while the former was fortunate yet also unfortunate. This gnomic saying meant that Mauropous was unfortunate in being exiled and out of favour, but fortunate in being a metropolitan running a see; Psellos was fortunate in living in his homeland but unfortunate in being treated there dishonourably.

Date etc.: 1053–4: Mauropous is in Euchaita, Psellos is uncomfortable at court (cf. the old man of S 40).

Moore 95: ms P. Karpozilos 1982, 38 n. 95, 46 n. 148, 113 n. 13; Karpozilos 1990, 18 n. 48, 23 n. 73, 24 n. 80; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 98; De Vries-van der Velden 1996, 253; Grünbart 2005, 72, 294; Sarres 2005, 97 n. 228; Lauxtermann 2017, 98 n. 29.

S 174 TO THE GENIKOS [NIKEPHOROS], NEPHEW
OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Nikephoros had complained he did not understand some of Psellos' philosophical writing. Psellos replied with examples of obscure discourse in the ancient world, especially among philosophers. He began with oracles, like advice to Athens on the 'wooden wall', spoken in a trance, and Bacchic pronouncements. Plato's *Phaedrus* described the soul in figurative language involving horses, but was fully understood. Philosophy often had an element of mystery or secrecy, with mystic trappings, especially over religion. Aristotle promoted obscurity. Christian philosophy had similar tendencies, not only over its Jewish heritage—mystic festivals, sacrifices, and symbols, which were not heretical. Nikephoros knew about rhetoric and philosophy, but not their compound form, commonly called politics, the origin of both, one concerning the mind, the other the tongue. As for Psellos, he might be a philosopher or something different and more complex. He did not practice popular rhetoric: he took the secrets of philosophy in a restrained, intellectual way and expressed them appropriately. Nikephoros should not think this admission had revealed all his secrets, for philosophy needed a shroud of mystery. Nikephoros had not yet begun his real initiation, which required time and ceremony. What Psellos had said was suitable for the public. If it had value and a sensible reception among monks, he would improve it suitably. The result might be his real message, unlike what he said before.

Date etc.: c.1060–6. This letter, like S 117, was readdressed to Nikephoros from his brother Constantine when a Vienna seal (Mech. 26) was published as showing that Nikephoros held the office of *genikos* (see Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 113).

Moore 127: *mss* P, U, A. Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 69; Dakouros 1977, 49 nn. 2–3, 64 n. 1, 72 nn. 5–6; Lemerle 1977, 218 n. 55; Tatakis 1977, 181 nn. 231–2, 198 n. 320; Niarchos 1979, 133 n. 47; Meyendorff 1983, 62 n. 20; Anastasi 1988b (Italian translation); Chondridou 2002, 212 n. 229; Tatakis 2003, 150 nn. 237–8, 167 n. 326; Wassiliou and Seibt 2004, 81 n. 370; Angelidi 2005, 236 n. 41, 237 n. 45; Grünbart 2005, 87 n. 76, 295, 352; Jenkins 2006, 146 n. 40; Papaioannou 2012, 182 n. 40, 183 n. 42; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 113 n. 30; Papaioannou 2013, 36 n. 27, 109 n. 64, 177–8; Bernard 2017, 28; Jeffreys 2017, 74 and n. 43, 76; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 175 (=C 1) To the monk Ioannes Xiphilinos, who became patriarch

S 176 [TO THE *PROTOASEKRETIS*, THE *LIBELLISIOS*
AND THE *EPI TON DEESEON*]

Psellos wrote one letter to three friends in the army of Romanos IV, not so as to avoid writing three, but testing his skill in addressing three men at once. He used random order, not knowing their status or any way of ranking them. The task was hard, despite their unity of friendship, because of their delightful

individuality within uniformity. After praising their common morality and respect for learning, he gave a brief pen-portrait of each, leaving it to them to identify which was which. He hoped the letter would cement their friendship. He then began a bewildering tour de force, finding, as he related to their different personalities, that his own character too was multifaceted, composed of opposites with an overarching idea. This was a basic principle of human existence, which he explored in several ways, analysing the relationship of one person to three friends. Was he a mixture of the personalities implied by the three relationships? But they too were multiple, as they related to each other. His speculation gradually slipped into a complex musical analogy, as he was speaking to musicians. His three friends were physically fit for military operations, but Psellos was too heavy. That was why he had adopted Kaisareia as the turning-post of his military race. He hoped that they would go on to victory, not driving straight on at random, but choosing an indirect route to the same goal. Choirosphaktes could have been added to their number, but Psellos made an exception for him as a rhetor, as Choirosphaktes too regarded him as exceptional.

Date etc.: 1068, during the first Anatolian campaign of Romanos IV. The *protoasekretis* was Aristenos.

Moore 259: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 119; Weiss 1973, 102 n. 330, 115 n. 376; Gautier 1976a, 91, 94 n. 24, 97 n. 48; Ljubarskij 1978, 39; Snipes 1981, 104; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 131; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12, 30 n. 114, 35 n. 127, 429 nn. 2–3, 430 n. 4; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 287–8; Ljubarskij 2004, 69–70, 97, 99, 100–1; Grünbart 2005, 170 n. 281, 218; Papaioannou 2013, 12 n. 31, 74, 126 n. 106, 146.

S 177 [TO THE *PROTOVESTIARIOS*
(CONSTANTINE LEICHOUDES?)]

Psellos told the *protovestiaros* [Leichoudes?] that he had sympathized with Esaias, about to suffer away from Constantinople, but rejoiced that he would be sheltered by Leichoudes, being both healed and consoled. Psellos was disappointed in the place where he was [Olympos?], separated from Leichoudes and with his arrangements for his adoptive family collapsing. He could not be his usual philosophical or generous self over that. His only confidant was the exemplary *parakoimomenos*, whom he visited for consolation. He thought often of Leichoudes. He heard little news [on Olympos?], just rumours. May the better course be victorious. He wished good health to Leichoudes, who was most important to Psellos and the great hope of Byzantium. He asked to be remembered to everybody, especially those wanting contact with him.

Date etc.: 1055. Psellos is writing to a *protovestiaros*, an equal or superior whom he knows well: surely Leichoudes? Psellos is isolated, probably not in Constantinople (note the use of *τῆς Πόλεως*, not a demonstrative, and complaints that he did not know what was happening).

Leichoudes was probably *protovestiarior* from the reign of Constantine IX till he became patriarch. Psellos seems to have two sick family members. Perhaps the sickness was the final collapse of his arrangements for his adoptive family at the end of his time on Olympos? The two would then be Elpidios Kenchres (his betrothed son-in-law) and Euphemia (his adopted daughter), who proved incompatible.

Moore 39: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 35; Volk 1990, 23 n. 79, 78 n. 133, 319 nn. 65 and 68; Riedinger 2010, 6 n. 6; Grünbart 2005, 235, 319; Papaioannou 2006, 175–6 (English translation); Papaioannou 2013, 215 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017a, 49 nn. 28–9.

S 178 TO THE SYNKELLOS ROMANOS, METROPOLITAN OF KYZIKOS

Psellos discussed his plans as a *charistikarios* with Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos, via the metaphor of the *charistikarios* marrying the monasteries he owned. Widows, he declared, were easier to pick up than those with a live husband: the latter were prettier, but they were more concealed from the world, devoted to their husbands and a legal minefield for lovers. The monastery of Artigenes (Romanos' suggestion for his investment) was already 'married' to an elderly *charistikarios*, who was welcome to enjoy her embraces, while Psellos preferred marriage to Mountania, recently 'widowed' of two owners. He was better-looking and better-natured than either of them. He planned to offer his monastery 'bride' better presents—farm animals, not gold and jewels, as she was a country girl. But as she had gone through two husbands with no sign of mourning, he would arrange a suitable co-husband for her, to attract her to Psellos himself by comparison. Artigenes was the more attractive, but would be high-maintenance, while poor Mountania could be kept happy with a smile and an elderly co-investor to make Psellos look young. He asked Romanos to make arrangements for the wedding.

Date etc.: c.1060–3. The destructive earthquake of 1063 would make the light-hearted tone of this letter difficult for years (cf. S 30). See also excursus 15.3. For Artigenes and Mountania, see p. 52.

Moore 451: ms P, K. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 46, 179 n. 223; Ahrweiler 1967, 24, 25; Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 266 n. 154; Weiss 1973, 147 nn. 500–3 and 505 (partial German translation); Gautier 1975, 329; Harvey 1989, 159 n. 195; Volk 1990, 27 n. 99; Chondridou 2002, 359 n. 226; Ljubarskij 2004, 51 n. 28; Grünbart 2005, 254; Jeffreys 2017a, 52, 54–5.

S 179 TO THE METROPOLITAN OF EPHEOS

Psellos told the metropolitan of Ephesos he would have some excuse for not writing if he knew that Psellos disliked his words or did not drink them as from a spring. But as he was aware that Psellos would break off other conversations to pay immediate attention to his words, why did he hold them back, closing off the spring? Did he not know that communication

and union by letter was the only consolation for friends who were apart? Breaking the link more or less broke the friendship. Psellos was not convinced that discussion in the mind and imagination could bring people together. It could stimulate memory and revive *philia*, but was less effective than letter-writing, as the imagined friend neither spoke nor listened to speech. Psellos countered the metropolitan's likely objections: he was a wise man who was good at letters. Psellos' own taste was for simple letters, preferring to be charmed rather than impressed by shallow and complex bombast. The metropolitan was effective on both counts, with the cool precision of the spring and considerable linguistic depth, a splendid performer. On this Psellos had said what he had to say. Andreas, the metropolitan's deacon, was rather unhappy with his progress in his service, and suspicions were circulating that it would not continue. Why should the two separated friends not make him the link to join them into a real union—belonging as he did to both of them?

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Concern for Andreas would be unlikely in a letter before 1060.

Moore 111: ms P. Grünbart 2005, 341.

S 180 [TO THE *KRITES* OF THRAKESION?]

Psellos began a letter to the *krites* with plays on the name of Philadelpheia, the town Psellos had just visited. He thanked its people both for recent hospitality and two earlier visits. The first was as a teenage subordinate of Kataphloron, on his way with him to office in Mesopotamia, the second was a period as governor, when he was treated with a respect which hoped for reward. He was pleased to find men who recalled both, and who noted that his now grey hair had once been rather fair. They crowded round him respectfully, kissing different parts of his anatomy. He felt quite emotional. In this frame of mind, he asked them about their current *krites* (addressee of the letter). They all commended him, praising his varied virtues in their provincial way. When Psellos added that he and the *krites* were friends, they begged him to ask the *krites* to be a little more kind and humane, particularly over a disputed issue of taxation. The rest of the letter expressed absolute confidence in the justice of the *krites*' actions, while wondering whether strict law would be compromised if he reviewed his decisions (at his friend Psellos' prompting), to see if at a deeper level some benefit could be found for the people of Philadelpheia. Psellos added his own friendship to the balance, while stressing that he did not want to interfere with justice. His letter was longwinded and simplistic, perhaps an appropriate tone for the group he was hoping to benefit.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 or later (excursus 16). Psellos' grey hair gives the letter chronological depth: it is a pity that Philadelpheia is not on an obvious route by which Psellos

could have returned from Romanos IV's second Anatolian expedition. The city, capital of Thrakesion, was a town well known in Byzantium, but Riedinger attempts to identify the scene of this letter as another Philadelpheia, a village. Despite his range of arguments, I do not think he makes his case for rejecting the obvious identification.

Moore 4: ms P. Sathas 1874, xxxvii n. 1; Zervos 1919, 65 n. 3; Weiss 1973, 22 n. 59; Dakouros 1977, 48 n. 7; Volk 1990, 8 n. 12, 331 n. 14; Saradi 1995, 186 nn. 95 and 98; Cheynet 1999, 284 n. 2; Limousin 1999, 361 n. 71, 362 n. 83; Gkoutzioukostas 2004, 281 n. 1271; Grünbart 2005, 220; Kaldellis 2007, 218 n. 87; Riedinger 2010, 19–21 (French translation); Papaioannou 2013, 5, 206–7.

S 181 TO [AIMILIANOS], THE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH

Psellos told the patriarch he was delighted that his correspondent's reputation was now being spread around the world by credible eyewitnesses with warmth and enthusiasm. Such a one was an Antiochene [name suppressed] who was supremely conscientious in expressing his thanks for benefits received. Psellos had a lot to do with him, having done favours for him, and so was a useful witness over his praise of the patriarch. Earlier, when the man came to see Psellos, he would tell him his favourite old stories about Antioch. Now his only subject of conversation was the virtues of Aimilianos, on which he would discourse at inordinate length. This made Psellos reveal his own acquaintance with the patriarch and *philia* for him, and praise him in return, probably defeating the man in this competition. Psellos had received recompense for his praise, for Aimilianos' glory was so great as to reflect on him, when he commended Psellos' own work. The Antiochene too deserved an equivalent reward, a special distinction from Aimilianos. He should confirm the honour given the man at Psellos' request by the previous patriarch [Theodosios Chrysoberges, if this is Aimilianos]. Aimilianos had inherited generosity from his father, and was developing it even further.

Date etc.: nw c.1064–8 (excursus 7). The patriarch who knew Psellos well and dominated conversations about Antioch was almost certainly Aimilianos. Might the Antiochene whose name is suppressed be the Joseph of M 2–4 (Weiss 1972)?

Moore 519: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 159; Weiss 1972, 34; Ljubarskij 1978, 97; Ljubarskij 2004, 149; Grünbart 2005, 167 n. 255, 251, 337, 356.

S 182 TO [IOANNES MAUROPOUS] METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA

Despite all the congratulations Psellos received as an outstanding philosopher, he considered himself (he wrote) just one in a long line of learned men, and had not been altered. But when he received constant praise from Mauropous the situation changed: the latter might in narrow professional terms be less prominent than critics who praised past philosophers, but his overall standing

in virtue made him pre-eminent. Psellos, praised by him in outstanding letters, was more to be envied than his predecessors. He felt better than Phokion receiving special greetings from Alexander the Great. He felt mystical joy as if walking on air. How could he respond to Mauropous? It was like replying to a thunderbolt from Zeus, an oracle from Apollo or Moses speaking to God on the mountain. Silence would be more effective, even louder, than an attempted reply in kind. Thus his usual reaction was to say nothing in a respectful and dazed way. Many might think Mauropous slightly greater than others, but Psellos saw such distinctions with the penetrating eye of a philosopher, and realized his supreme personality and beautiful character. But his mute response to Mauropous himself contrasted with the eloquence with which he praised him before every other audience, learned or not, large and small, especially the emperor, using every skill in the armoury of a very skilled rhetorician, as convincing as Gorgias. He finally revealed the secret of his philosophical belief, the mysterious properties of the Pythagorean number four, recommending it to Mauropous.

Date etc.: 1043–4. In S 182–3, Psellos has access to the emperor, unlike Mauropous. The date is well before 1047, when Mauropous was part of the court, a major writer of texts for Monomachos.

Moore 396: ms P, B. Weiss 1972, 27 n. 59; Gautier 1976a, 82 n. 3; Dakouros 1977, 45 n. 2; Lemerle 1977, 214 n. 48; Ljubarskij 1978, 46, 48 n. 15; Karpozilos 1982, 44 n. 141, 113 n. 13; Maltese 1988, 28 n. 11; Kazhdan 1993, 92, 95; Ljubarskij 2004, 80; Papaioannou 2013, 36 n. 27; Bernard 2014, 46 n. 46, 99 n. 106; Bernard 2017, 18; Lauxtermann 2017, 103, 105 n. 53, 122 n. 114, 126.

S 183 [TO IOANNES MAUROPOUS
METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA]

Psellos hoped that Mauropous, in concentrating on Psellos' letters, understood their motivation, despite all his complaints. But if, while knowing Psellos' character, his apparent anger was real, this was an object lesson in blaming friends unjustly. Whatever he did, in whatever group Psellos found himself, even with the emperor, he always spoke of his friend's virtues. When the talk was on writing, *philia*, eloquence, charm, or morality, he would always bring in Mauropous, not in a forced, mechanical way, but naturally. In writing on other subjects, he would include Mauropous' name, out of real conviction. If he was so punctilious as a friend, would he change when writing to Mauropous himself? Of course not! Mauropous might ask why Psellos gave him reason for pain by speaking frankly from the heart, as if conversing face-to-face, not using platitudes. He knew his friend was often surprised when he frowned at him and made up stories which annoyed him but later won his praise: why should his letters not reflect his conversation? But Mauropous' surprise must not make him think that Psellos was changing immutable opinions. He should not be such a grouch in his letters: he should not set rules for Psellos' writing,

but act more philosophically. He would stop now, to avoid further offence, and address Mauropous as his friend wanted. He was Psellos' only teacher, the inspiration of his work, his moral and religious guide. In return he gave words, orally or in letters: if only he would change his rigid attitude towards him. Kallipsychos had risen further in his favour by praising Mauropous' virtues.

Date etc.: 1043–4. See S 182, which seems to have annoyed Mauropous and provoked an angry response, which Psellos is here attempting to mollify.

Moore 120: ms P. Lemerle 1977, 200 n. 12; Ljubarskij 1978, 42, 46; Karpozilos 1982, 27 n. 30, 44 n. 141, 113 n. 13; Kazhdan 1993, 89, 92, 96; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 321 n. 14; Chondridou 2002, 162 n. 52, 214 n. 237; Ljubarskij 2004, 73, 80; Papaioannou 2013, 5 n. 11; Bernard 2015, 188 n. 72; Bernard 2017, 18 n. 22; Lauxtermann 2017, 105, 106.

S 184 TO THE *PROTOPROEDROS* CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF MICHAEL KEROULARIOS THE PATRIARCH

Didn't Constantine get the joke? He had not read the letter as playful (Psellos said), while Psellos almost danced as he wrote it, and expected Constantine to join the dance. To make an erotic parallel: were lovers not led on as much by tiffs as by kisses? Nature made thorns as a provocation to smell the rose. The same with letters: the delightful and hilarious needed to be combined with the apparently severe; otherwise it would be lame and just ridiculous. The letter was written so that Constantine could enjoy thorns as well as blossoms. Was this not how they spoke to each other, face to face? Such sparring should not be taken seriously: Psellos would never deliberately offend him. Socrates in Platonic dialogues used humiliating language of close friends. Psellos did something similar. He asked what Christ's disciples would say if placed among Scythian nomads. All this was spoken in jest, though the joke depended on making the scene convincing in every detail. None of it was in earnest, all was under erasure, to amuse Constantine and win praise for Psellos. If he saw a work of Attic comedy, he would laugh at the masks and admire the acting. If Psellos the philosopher became an actor for him and turned his frown into a broad guffaw, would Constantine not accept his licence to do this? Psellos was willing to put aside his professional image and mock Constantine, to make a good letter and amuse him. He asked him to spare the criticism, because of the skilful letters he received, and not to denounce him to the empress Eudokia, Constantine's cousin in blood and in law, who encapsulated gigantic shapes in a tiny span. He openly expressed his own double persona with a signature: Constantine's *protoproedros*, friend, brother, servant, and teacher.

Date etc.: 1067–71 (excursuses 9 and 10), before Eudokia was immured in a monastery towards the end of 1071. Probably the first letter indicating that Psellos was *protoproedros*. Despite Moore's reading in the title that Constantine was merely *proedros*, Stratis Papaioannou confirms that the mss reading is *protoproedros*.

Moore 256: *mss P*, L. Ljubarskij 1978, 64, 66–9; Oikonomides 1963, 119 n. 72; Volk 1990, 205 n. 8, 256 n. 22; Chondridou 2002, 213 n. 234, 241 n. 94; Ljubarskij 2004, 105, 108–11; Grünbart 2005, 74 n. 94, 111 n. 272, 278, 357; Papaioannou 2013, 10, 12, 118 n. 87, 149 n. 66, 176; Jeffreys 2014, 88 nn. 26 and 29; Bernard 2015, 187 nn. 67–9; Bernard 2017, 29, 30 n. 70, 38; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 75, 78, 81 and n. 64; MARC LAUXTERMANN; STRATIS PAPAIOANNOU.

S 185 TO A MONK AND ARCHIMANDRITE ON OLYMPOS

A real philosopher would always defend himself theoretically on legal grounds. Psellos claimed to know how the monk would respond, and so based his case on his writings. But the other realized he had written the letter artfully, not philosophically, so rather than praising the harmony of his words he attacked his ill-advised penchant for philosophy. Was this why the monk at once brought up the danger run by Psellos' soul, seeking to detach it from matter and bring it to God? All the monk's praises of Psellos were made with a purpose, to prevent him from being deeply wounded by the monk's words and killed rather than healed. Beneath the verbiage, the truth was that the monk, his honoured master standing above matter and outside the body, was lamenting for his soul, which was immersed in matter and unable to rise to God. So by prayer, and by advice and criticism of Psellos, he told him to look upwards and shed the burden of matter. But Psellos, through habit and seduced by what appeared good, could not see what was truly good. The monk should continue to strengthen his mind to perceive that. Psellos was sure that as the monk Michael, he would find his correspondent fairer, kinder, and more willing to help, both because that was his nature, and because Psellos requested it.

Date etc.: 1053–4, just before Psellos' tonsure (excursus 11). Note that Psellos' monastic name has already been decided. The same man is probably addressed in KD 112, written soon after Psellos left the monastery.

Moore 470: *ms P*. Kaldellis 2007, 212 n. 72; Jeffreys 2017a, 49–50.

S 186 TO CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

The first part of Psellos' letter is full of the terminology of strategy and tactics, to show how far such thoughts had driven from his mind his usual philosophical interests, even in a letter to his dearest friend. He was obsessed, like a prophet in a trance. But he assured Constantine that this was a temporary phase, and he would soon be on a swift journey home. The whole army too was preoccupied and despondent: this was why he had not written before. There were no flowers there to make honey and sweeten his words. In fact his bees no longer worked as in the past, as was shown by this letter, which started out quite well but otherwise retained only a shadow of his old style. He felt like Athens, full of great names referring to shadows of the past. His attempts at

philosophy were unsuccessful. The disastrous situation in which he found himself was compensated by the emperor's favour, but the balance remained negative. A major problem was the loss of Constantine and his brother, as well as his own family. Memories were no consolation—in fact they increased the suffering, for he was susceptible to such feelings. He wanted to write often to the two of them in single letters, or even separately to both: but in fact his letters would be few and unattractive. His friends should be especially attentive to his family, who were left in their charge.

Date etc.: 1069 (excursus 10). Sent from the second Anatolian campaign of Romanos IV.

Moore 17: *ms P.* Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15; Anastasi 1974, 384 n. 75, 386 n. 78; Ljubarskij 1978, 63, 65, 66 n. 40; Volk 1990, 233 n. 74; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 302–10 (Greek text and French translation of most of the letter); De Vries-van der Velden 2003, 122 n. 1; Ljubarskij 2004, 56, 103, 107 n. 54; Papaioannou 2013, 37 n. 29, 215 n. 71; Jeffreys 2017, 74 n. 43, 76.

S 187 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wondered if he and his correspondent had dealt in the last two letters with all the marvels of nature, arts, and sciences. He now added wonderful resonances from plucking a stringed instrument and the wonders of geometry. But what of learning not subject to reason? An Egyptian mystic said that those who wanted a temple to last for ever should shut in its foundations a sacred snake with plenty of food. The divine father made heavenly temples unshakeable, but wise men building on earth used mystic science. They filled hollow statues with things sacred to their gods, animal, vegetable, or mineral, even inscribed seals or perfumes, with their vessels. Success in empowering the deity was haphazard, even in simultaneous attempts. It was essential to whisper a mystic word. It was wonderful how some small animals terrified larger ones. Egyptian ointment smeared on the eyelids gave realistic visions, when the visionary's mind viewed the incorporeal. Such inspired visions the ancients saw, through herbs, stones, and sacrifice; spells worked by perfumed ink. Psellos' discourse avoided marvels, using the regular philosophical methods of Plato, Aristotle, and Porphyrios. His ear and mind were attuned to regular, not extraordinary, notes. Simple logic too, used philosophically, offered much analytical power. He advised freeing the mind from this. Philosophy was not naturally beautiful, so Psellos kept by him one book of words and another of ideas, using each in turn, adding to philosophy the sounds and rhythms of rhetoric. His correspondent should do the same, but with more focus on verbal beauty and rhetoric.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 36: *ms P.* Bidez 1936, 95; Dodds 1947, 62 n. 69; Mango 1963, 61 n. 39; Dakouros 1977, 57 n. 2; Tatakis 1977, 160 n. 106, 196 nn. 306–7; Niarchos 1979, 129 n. 17; Volk 1990, 217 n. 70, 222, 223 n. 74, 235; Duffy 1995, 85 n. 5; Ierodiakonou 2002a, 159; Tatakis 2003, 130 n. 110, 164 nn. 312–13; Grünbart 2005, 357; Papaioannou 2013, 6 n. 14, 37 n. 29; Bernard 2017, 23 n. 40.

S 188 UNADDRESSED

Psellos explained to a friend that everything exists for a reason, then advised him on teaching the boy. Plato said the soul was not created, and Aristotle claimed the same about matter; but both were really confessing ignorance of the true causes. Humanity is ignorant of most such reasons, leading to the hypothesis of the marvellous. For example, most things are not pure, but, like simple medicines, show elements of their opposites. This seems strange and marvellous, but only because the reason is obscure. Everything is subject to natural forces, attracting it in similar or opposite directions, not impeded by distance. In the operation of magic and astrology similarities and differences play active roles, as in the symbolism of Assyrian images. Such details are unknown to most people, but Psellos studied them all, without using any, in fact cursing those using forbidden methods. He learned enough of some to know they had causes which were generally unknown. As examples, he cited several animals with apparently marvellous traits. The grammarian too could show general principles underlying surprising phonetic features. He added issues studied in geometry, astrology, and distinctions made in philosophy. Homer gave a poetic solution to problems of origins. He concluded that, while each art and science provided reasons for its own facts, natural phenomena also had reasons, unknown to most people. He advised his friend only to push his pupil towards the marvellous to highlight nature and inspire wonder, the basis of philosophy. He should promote both philosophy and rhetoric, to stop the boy being a philosopher unable to speak or a rhetorician talking only of rhetoric.

Date etc.: undated.

Moore 332: ms P. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 65–6 (partial Russian translation); Zervos 1919, 197 n. 2 (partial French translation), 199 n. 1; Dakouros 1977, 50 nn. 2–3, 64 n. 1, 73 nn. 4–5; Tatakis 1977, 160 n. 110, 169 n. 151, 171 n. 166, 172 nn. 167, 170, and 174–5, 199 n. 321; Niarchos 1979, 132 n. 38; Tatakis 2003, 130 n. 115, 139 nn. 156, and 160, 141 nn. 172–3, 142 nn. 176 and 180–1, 167 n. 327; Grünbart 2005, 357; Jenkins 2006, 141 n. 20, 146 nn. 38 and 40; Papaioannou 2012, 183 n. 42; Papaioannou 2013, 6 n. 14, 36 n. 27, 37 n. 29; Bernard 2017, 23 n. 40; FLORIS BERNARD.

S 189 TO CHASANES, VESTARCHES
AND KRITES OF MACEDONIA

Psellos wrote to Chasanes, *krites* of Macedonia, uncertain which of them (if either) was primary in their friendship: his letters, for example, caused the other's gratitude, while Chasanes inspired him to write. He did not think he showed favour to Chasanes: the latter was making something out of nothing in thinking he wrote with special skill for him. He certainly did his best, as he did for many, without getting the same thanks. Chasanes was very grateful, fertile

soil where a slight cause would bring a rich harvest of credit. Chasanes was impressed by the literary qualities of Psellos' work, which he admitted, as shown by his whole career. But not everyone was so positive as Chasanes. There were different kinds of charm exerted by different genres, and people reacted in different ways. Psellos honoured philosophy, but praised rhetoric as landsmen praised the sea, choosing philosophy as his element. Yet the two were mixed inextricably in his work, and he was recognized as an expert in both. Chasanes (like others) enjoyed his lighter writing, but disliked heavy philosophy. So Psellos sometimes wrote cunningly with rhetorical language to attract an audience, sometimes with rough philosophy. He hoped for success with one means or the other. Did he have different ways to charm Chasanes? He played his lyre as musically as he could, with constant changes of harmony and popular rhythms. He said no more to avoid boasting. He ended with advice over the people of Rodinos (?), where Chasanes' gentle approach met local barbarism. He suggested uncompromising insistence on the rules.

Date etc.: nw 1060–70 (excursuses 5, 15.1, and 16.5). Chasanes' biography, exchange and reception as metaphors for the inspiration to write letters, and professional legal advice all suggest a date after 1060. Papaioannou 2012a points out that S 172, S 189, and S 168, appearing in this sequence in ms. B, all begin with the same phrase.

Moore 346: mss P, B. Tinnefeld 1973, 154 n. 15, 165; Anastasi 1974, 375 n. 52, 379 n. 64; (Cheynet 2008, 639 n. 75); Papaioannou 2012a, 306 n. 60; Papaioannou 2013, 219 n. 85; Bernard 2014, 46 n. 47; Jeffreys 2017, 70 n. 30.

S 190 TO ZOMES, *KRITES* OF OPSIKION

Psellos told Zomes he heard the emperor read his letter, and intervened when appropriate. Then the logothetes and Psellos argued with the emperor over him. They demanded his replacement, because of prolonged illness and decreasing motivation; the emperor stressed his honesty and competence, wanting to keep him. The unequal struggle was brief: the emperor won. His attitude later hardened, and he sealed a decree. Psellos thus reported that their excellent plan had ended badly, with results opposite to intentions. The emperor, from other reports and personal experience of Zomes, had an accurate view of him as the sort of administrator needed to put things right, so he wanted him to look after the theme. It was good to have this reputation, unless, like Zomes, you wanted a different life. Psellos, as Zomes asked, would try to help, out of friendship and a sense of God's will. His advice was this: if Zomes had no prospect of survival, he should take drastic steps. But if death was not now imminent, he should do nothing to stop the emperor from exercising mercy. He might succeed by calmly repeating his request, including the medical prognosis and his divine calling. But he should not expect tansure to solve all problems at once. In Psellos' experience (and he knew of no witnesses to the contrary), the change happened slowly, and the demands of

friends and family grew in a way lay people did not understand. Zomes needed time to prepare for monastic life. If he agreed, he should act accordingly. But he might be braver than Psellos, and despise his words. With God's grace he should make the right choices.

Date etc.: c.1053–4 (cf. excursus 14). Ioannes the logothetes was appointed by Constantine IX to replace Constantine Leichoudes, dismissed c.1050. Ioannes survived to hold office under Theodora and perhaps longer, but it is hard to read this letter as referring to Michael VI. Psellos' claim to expertise in matters of tonsure suggests that he was already tonsured himself; but it may mean that he was merely making preparations.

Moore 378: mss P, L. Zervos 1919, 71 n. 2; Weiss 1973, 38 n. 113; Ljubarskij 1978, 101, 109; Volk 1990, 25 n. 92, 438–40; Limousin 1999, 362 n. 81; Ljubarskij 2004, 155–6, 166, 167; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 204, 216, 217, 220; Jeffreys 2017a, 50–1.

S 191 TO THE *NOTARIOI* OF THE EMPEROR KOMNENOS

Psellos wrote to the *notarioi* of Isaakios I, asking them where in the world they [and the army] might be. He had no idea, save that they were probably moving quickly. He asked them what they were doing, and pictured them in his imagination. Their leader [the imperial *protonotarios*?] was, as it were, conductor of the choir, arranging everything. The others would be taking notes, thinking of tactics, weapons, garrisons, and diplomacy. Another would be concerned with unruly *kritai*, while the most vigorous of them would be raising taxes or organizing the tax-collectors. Control of the imperial correspondence and commands was a heavy responsibility. He used eyes and ears to imagine their activities. Or perhaps they were in fact out hunting, keeping order as in battle? The hare betrayed by its tracks, turning and moving irregularly so as to escape? The hunting-dog sniffing the air where paths diverged? Or the hunting of birds, which might reach safety or might be caught on the wing? He imagined more dangerous game. Perhaps this was vain, and they were in fact working on experiments like those of the atomists (?). In any case, he hoped they were enjoying themselves and each other's company.

Date etc.: 1058–9. Isaakios' last campaign.

Moore 498: ms P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 92; Zervos 1919, 73 n. 1; Weiss 1973, 114 n. 374; Gkoutzioukostas 2002–3, 77 n. 104.

S 192 (= KD 64) To the *krites* of Thrace and Macedonia [see KD 64 and the three following letters]

S 193 [TO A *KRITES*(?)]

Psellos told a *krites* not to think frequent requests for a relative either unnecessary or bothersome. If his words were unnecessary, nature caused the

redundancy, and that should not be blamed or accused of interference. He asked the *krites* to support the man and increase his concern for him, giving him both prestige and wealth. He needed both of these, but especially the latter. He did not live just for himself but for a wife and children, for whom he would exchange prestige for wealth.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursuses 16.1 and 16.5). Discussions of the needs of a subordinate and advice on the balance of money and prestige suggest a date after 1060.

Moore 524: ms P. Ljubarskij 1978, 111; Ljubarskij 2004, 169.

S 194 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos wrote to a *krites* about a poor young relative. He had come to the capital to see his father and other family members, then left to serve the *krites*, to whom he gave due honour. Psellos would ask many favours for him, as a relative who was poor and just starting on life. The *krites*, as Psellos' friend, would naturally help him. But friendship, help, and the like were relative terms: Psellos hoped that the *krites* would apply them in an energetic way, so that Psellos would feel still more grateful and thank him more effusively.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.1). Dating is based on help for a subordinate priming a virtuous circle.

Moore 125: ms P.

S 195 [TO A KRITES]

Psellos asked a *krites* to help a poor man face unforeseen problems. He was not seeking a legal judgement, defence against an attacker, or the blocking of a hostile neighbour. He just wanted help and intervention when he happened to meet difficulties.

Date etc.: Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7 (excursus 16). There are no dating criteria but for use of the network.

Moore 147: mss P, L. Hase and Miller 1875, 84–5, 151 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Saradi 1995, 185 n. 93; Chondridou 2002, 143 n. 153; Ljubarskij 2004, 168; Grünbart 2005, 230.

S 196 UNADDRESSED

Psellos wrote that he had heard of the monk's death with an appropriate mix of sadness and joy: sadness at losing a dear friend, joy that his friend had advanced from the narrow to the spacious road, and having lived as an ascetic

and struggled a little in this life, he was reaping an abundant reward, as Christ told in the parable of the vineyard. Psellos was reminded of his own labours for his correspondent over the issue raised in the letter he had sent. He had begged the man (left unnamed) to do all he could in his correspondent's cause. But he must inform him that the issue was too difficult, and so must remain for a time in abeyance.

Date etc.: undated. It is more likely than not that Psellos is a monk.

Moore 449: mss P, L. Sarres 2005, 51 n. 86, 98, 176 n. 30, 220 n. 43; Jeffreys 2017a, 50.

S 197 UNADDRESSED

Psellos gave a friend a dramatic account of his illness. He had died again, had perhaps undergone resurrection, had been dead and buried, but his friend had written no funeral eulogy. But having died, life was so painful that Psellos desired a kind of death without suffering. Having failed over the eulogy (perhaps not having heard of the death), his friend should sound for him the call to quarters, with a trumpet (if he had one with acceptable sound), a divine trump perhaps, for there was no need to add a Stentorian blast. For those making sounds in other ways, Psellos' ears were so totally blocked as not to notice even [a loud noise?]. He first suffered a fever—like the fire of Gehenna burning his heart with insufferable pain for eleven days. Now this was unexpectedly quenched, he succumbed to the opposite tendency to the same extent, making life and movement very hard. Even obscure treatments were abandoned. His breath was so cold that it could be used instead of water to soothe those with fever. If his friend did not believe this, he should come and see.

Date etc.: c.1045–7 (?): Psellos seems to adopt the same combination of dramatic description of serious illness with bantering tone that he used in KD 13–15, addressed to Maupous.

Moore 200: mss P, Y. Grünbart 2005, 218; Papaioannou 2013, 195.

TRYING TO IMPROVE AN INSULTING JOB OFFER (2 LETTERS)

When his old friend Leon Paraspondylos was put in charge of the government by the empress Theodora, Psellos had hoped to gain a good position, despite the fact that he had been pressured into becoming a monk. But after long delays, he was only offered a position in an institution outside the capital run by Papa Sabinos [perhaps an elementary school]. He tried through two letters to the magistros Psephas to have the situation improved.

S 198 To the *magistros* Psephas

The *magistros* Psephas asked Psellos how he was getting on. He replied that the wonderful empress [Theodora] was very positive about him with praise and promises which had yet to bear fruit. As for the philosopher [Leon Paraspondylos], he had shown what one might call philosophical reserve, dashing the hopes Psellos felt when Leon took over power. Despite the philosophical interests Psellos shared with Leon, no job offer was made, and he was forced into humiliating requests: yet he made them. Psephas might expect Psellos to be offered a splendid post, but he, who had left very high positions, was judged unworthy of routine administrative positions. He had only been offered the three-month (school?) of Papa-Sabinos—he who had worldwide fame as a teacher and interpreter of every branch of philosophy. Thus he would have to take refuge at his country estate of Agros, which was quite undeveloped. Psephas should describe Psellos' desperate situation to Leon and beg earnestly for something better, using bitter philosophical complaints, and sparing no humiliation, hoping not to miss out on employment as well as losing his dignity.

Date etc.: 1055–6 (excursus 12). Note the reference to the empress Theodora, which mentions a title never used by Eudokia. For Agros, see pp. 53–4.

Moore 408: mss P, L. Hase and Miller 1875, 87–90, 152–3, 667 (Greek text, Latin translation, notes); Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 109–10, 181; Weiss 1973, 154 n. 533; Ljubarskij 1978, 31 n. 34; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1985, 124; Kazhdan 1994, 209; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 345–6 (substantial French translation); Ljubarskij 2004, 55 n. 37; Grünbart 2005, 216, 352; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 84 n. 143; Papaioannou 2013, 10, 35 n. 22, 45 n. 66; Bernard 2014, 42 n. 26; Bernard 2017, 15 n. 10, 23; Jeffreys 2017a, 53–4; Reinsch 2017, 128 n. 5.

S 199 To the *magistros* Psephas

In a second, shorter letter Psellos also spoke bitterly of the contrast between his qualifications and the post offered. In any contest Psephas would receive more written texts from Psellos than he gave. And how much would Psephas pay for Psellos as a slave? How many like him existed in the capital? None! And he was favoured by the empress [Theodora]: why was he only offered the petty (school?) of the priest Sabinos?

Date etc.: 1055–6. See S 198.

Moore 416: mss P, L. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 109–10, 181; Weiss 1973, 154 n. 533; Ljubarskij 1978, 31 n. 34; Kazhdan 1993, 98; De Vries-van der Velden 1999, 344–5 (substantial French translation); Limousin 1999, 349 n. 16; Ljubarskij 2004, 55 n. 37, 244; Grünbart 2005, 356; Jeffreys 2010, 84; Gkoutzioukostas 2011, 84 n. 143; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 47; Papaioannou 2013, 22 n. 60, 45 n. 66, 219 n. 85; Bernard 2017, 23.

S 200 [TO A KRITES(?)]

Psellos told a *krites* about a friend of his father's, whom he was recommending. He had known the man a long time, since before the disaster he had suffered by carelessness, when Psellos' affection for him was increased by pity. From the height of nobility and wealth he had become one of the poorest and most unfortunate of his circle. The *krites*, however was a wise man who well knew the vagaries of fate. He should deal honestly with him and speak to him in a friendly and correct way; he would then find in him basic goodness of character, for all the misfortunes he had faced. He had lost all his paternal wealth but for one estate, Hodegoi, from which he could just scrape together enough to live on. If he met a good judge, he would get his bread and water from it; if his judge was one who could disregard nobility, the man would get nothing, it would be the judge (?) who gained the food. Having been badly treated once, he would not survive a second episode. Psellos asked his learned correspondent not to regard this as an issue for bad treatment: it was not that the man would not survive bad treatment, he could not even bear remembering it.

Date etc.: Nw probably 1060–7 (excursus 16.2). Dating is based on the careful presentation of the litigant.

Moore 303: mss P, L.

S 201 [TO AN OFFICIAL]

Psellos asked an official for a favour for a poor man. He had petitioned others before on his behalf, and finally succeeded in freeing him from burdens which otherwise would have crushed him. Why was he asking again? Life was uncertain, and the man drew lessons from the myth of the Hydra, fearing that his amputated problems would grow afresh. Would the official please play the role of Herakles, not attacking new troubles but cauterizing the old, so they did not return?

Date etc.: undated. The cauterizing role was played by Eurystheus, not Herakles, but the role of the myth is clear; cf. KD 39.

Moore 387: mss P, L. Ljubarskij 1978, 110; Ljubarskij 2004, 168.

S 202 LETTER OF IOANNES MAUROPOUS [TO PSELLOS]

Mauropous (if he is the author) is replying to a previous letter from Psellos. Psellos had spoken of a holy man and a philosopher, probably comparing Mauropous to both, but possibly calling Mauropous the holy man and himself the philosopher. Mauropous is flattered and delighted to see that Psellos dares

to blend heaven and earth, mix the religious with the secular, and equate these two 'luminaries'. He is also very happy at Psellos' positive evaluation of a work of his. He hopes that their collaboration will continue in words and extend into actions. He ends by mentioning a gift of blankets and slippers he has sent.

Date etc.: c.1076, after Mauropous' resignation from Euchaita. This letter is one of four (cf. KD 209, S 14–15) transmitted in the corpus of letters of Psellos but probably not written by him. As such its subscription was always likely to be changed to claim Psellos' authorship: it claims in ms U to be written by Psellos to Mauropous rather than from him (as implied by ms P). Spadaro, who supported the ascription to Psellos, did not take this into account, seeming to demand too close a correspondence between letter and reply in rejecting Sathas' assumption that S 202–3 are linked in this way. There are, in fact, several words and ideas in S 202 taken up in S 203, as well as the perfect fit of their brief last lines. The letter has not found a place in Karpozilos' edition of Mauropous' letters.

Moore 438: ms P, U. Spadaro 1981; Karpozilos 1990; Ljubarskij 2004, 82–3; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Lauxtermann 2017, 101, 105, 111 n. 71.

S 203 (= SP 1) TO THE MOST LEARNED AND
TRUE ARCHBISHOP, THE MOST REVEREND
METROPOLITAN OF EUCHAITA AND SYNKELLOS

[This letter was edited by Sathas from the acephalic form in ms P, and only published in full by M.D. Spadaro in 1981 from ms U: Spadaro's edition (Sp 1) has been preferred.]

S 204 = Moore ORA.15: Psellos, *Oratoria minora*, no. 15.

S 205 TO CONSTANTINE XIPHILINOS,
DROUNGARIOS OF THE VIGLA

Xiphilinos had asked Psellos to translate Aristotle's *Organon* into simple language. Psellos replied at length, claiming that Xiphilinos had greatly overestimated his creative powers, and using various rhetorical strategies to inform him that he was asking for the impossible. He began by comparing the task to various adynata, like building a pyramid on his fingernail, then continued by explaining how much more difficult such translation would be than the original creation of Aristotle's text. The rest of the letter uses mythology, particularly comparing the task unfavourably with the labours of Herakles.

Date etc.: undated. The text is also edited as no. 5 in the *Philosophica I*, ed. Duffy. It is uncertain whether the requested work was written, and whether it has survived unedited. See Ierodiakonou 2002a.

Moore 728: mss P, K. Zervos 1919, 145 n. 5; Weiss 1973, 146 n. 492; Tatakis 1977, 181 n. 234, 196 n. 306; Niarchos 1979, 133 n. 46; Chondridou 2002, 117 nn. 53–4; Ierodiakonou 2002a, 159

n. 5; Tatakis 2003, 151 n. 240, 164 n. 312; Grünbart 2005, 323, 353; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012, 316 n. 29; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 110 n. 18.

S 206 TO A BOASTFUL TAVERN-KEEPER WHO
DABBLED IDLY IN PHILOSOPHY

Psellos replied to his correspondent, unsure whether to call him innkeeper or philosopher. He wondered what philosophy the other's words represented. It was not Chaldaeian. Was it Platonic philosophy, of which the other (falsely) claimed good knowledge? How was he steeped in bowls of Platonic wisdom? However, better not mention the water basins, the luxurious meals, or the cupbearers pouring wine for the public from two goblets evenly produced, not of glass, but of earthenware, or the voice which summoned everyone in a loud voice with a regular rise and fall, proclaiming his product as if with an innkeeper's knife (?). His correspondent supported this, with a love-hate relationship towards the laws of the *symponos* and *eparchos*, which he kept perfectly to save his behind from a beating, as often happened. Plato, whom he claimed to teach, said the only thing he knew was his own ignorance; how could the innkeeper claim to know everything as an expert, not as a mere mortal like Psellos? He accused the innkeeper of not giving philosophy heavenly water to drink, but making her grovel in the dregs of the tavern, the prey of every passer-by. Her soul living in a body and her divine limbs filled with music were reduced to those of a servant girl, or servile beggar-woman put on display in a tavern—or brothel. It was no use trying to defend himself: everyone knew how he had ruined her, knowing nothing of her rules nor of true wisdom. But now Psellos changed his tune, reluctantly calling him a philosopher, then explaining why. Psellos knew the *symponos* before he reached that office, and was once asked by him for a pardon over crimes the innkeeper knew of. The *symponos* gave him a long list of outlandish names of the dishes and wine-pots the innkeeper's father used. Psellos took no notice, but remembered another anecdote about the father. He had a beautiful servant girl called Sophia whom he loved and often publicly embraced. People thus called him Sophia-lover or philosopher, not loving wisdom but the girl he enjoyed in forbidden ways. Psellos finally addressed the innkeeper as an oracle-monger: his conversation was not concerned with philosophical subjects but with mysterious oracular numbers, which basically asked for payment.

Date etc.: undated. Also edited as no. 13 in A. Littlewood, *Oratoria minora*. This is appropriate: the text is not a letter.

Moore 907: mss P, L, V, v⁴, a⁵. Bezobrazov 1890/2001, 171; Dakouros 1977, 48 n. 9, 50 n. 1; Grünbart 2005, 107 n. 249, 111 n. 273, 218, 269, 279, 324, 341, 351, 354; MARC LAUXTERMANN.

S 207 (= C 2) To the patriarch Michael Keroularios
 S 208 = Moore ORA.31: Psellos, *Oratoria minora*, no. 31

SN 1 TO CONSTANTINE NEPHEW OF
 THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Psellos knew that Constantine wanted many letters from him, as his old teacher. But he apologized that he could not provide them. Not only was he growing old, but he was in an appalling situation beyond Kaisareia. He had been bewildered and exhausted by one stage of the campaign, through difficult country: but now that seemed like paradise in comparison with the current stage, where they were marching through the midst of a very numerous enemy. The emperor's bravery was a major encouragement, and Psellos' friend Iasites had organized things for him, so as to save his life. But in this chaos his epistolary powers had disappeared, and only thoughts of Constantine made him able to write at all. He remembered Constantine's wife and children (one of them his pupil), their servants and friends: eventually his military trials would end and he would return to see them again.

Date etc.: 1069, when Psellos was part of the second Anatolian expedition of Romanos IV; cf. excursus 5. De Vries-van der Velden has a good discussion of the geographical setting.

Moore 280: mss C, b, t, p², a⁷. Korydaleus 1625, 111–13, ep. 2 (Greek text); Weiss 1972, 30 nn. 70–1; Weiss 1973, 102 n. 330, 115 n. 376; Ljubarskij 1978, 32, 59 n. 27, 62 n. 33, 64; Snipes 1981, 89–107 (edition of the Greek text and English translation); Volk 1990, 35 n. 127, 430 n. 4; De Vries-van der Velden 1997, 288–91 (French translation of a substantial part of the letter); Karpozilou 1999; Ljubarskij 2004, 57, 97 n. 35, 102 n. 44, 105, 331; Grünbart 2005, 357; Braounou-Pietsch 2010, 21 n. 28; Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a, 110 n. 15, 112 n. 24; Bernard 2015, 185 n. 44; Bernard 2017, 28 nn. 61–2, 30.

SP 1 TO THE MOST LEARNED AND TRUE ARCHBISHOP,
 THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN
 OF EUCHAITA AND SYNKELLOS

Psellos replied, accusing Mauropous' praise of being sophistic, i.e. persuasive but untrue; his own superior philosophy concentrated more on the truth. Mauropous was blind through excessive friendship, seeing not what he saw but what he wanted to see. Mauropous' escalation of the truth left Psellos feeling that he was caught between two sources of bright light, the greater divine light and Mauropous' brilliant character. Lit in this way his dim self seemed dazzling too, and Mauropous' words caused confusion, reversing the roles of the two friends. Mauropous' surfeit of friendship distorted his own image of the two light-sources, creating a false sense of reality. Thus most people thought Psellos was the luminary, not Mauropous. Psellos realized that

his friend was a brilliant sun while his own role was like a moon. To correct this false impression, he would introduce Mauropous into his *Chronographia* in a dramatic way. He would not give him a mere human dimension, but place his origin at the level of brilliant luminaries, giving an accurate picture of his wonderful character and abilities. Because of the gifts Psellos would be comfortable next winter.

Date etc.: c. 1076, after Mauropous' resignation from Euchaita. Before full publication by Spadaro from ms U in 1981, this letter was known only in the truncated form of ms P, published by Sathas. There is only one indirect reference to Mauropous in the first edition of the *Chronographia* (VI 192). After this was circulating, it is hard to imagine a promise to give Mauropous a large part in the second edition, since his historical role in that period would be less. The *terminus ante quem* appears to be 1063 (the latest proposed date for the first edition), but maybe there is an indication here that Psellos thought of making changes in the first part of the second edition during the 1070s. The last line is surely a reference to Mauropous' gift mentioned at the end of S 202. Ms U calls Psellos *protoproedros* (cf. excursus 9).

Moore 118: ms P, U. Ljubarskij 1978, 48; Spadaro 1981, 166–7; Karpozilos 1982, 113 n. 13; Kazhdan 1993, 93, 96, 103; Ljubarskij 2004, 82–3; Grünbart 2005, 160 n. 203, 208, 216, 270; Papaioannou 2012a, 303 n. 48; Lauxtermann 2017, 111 n. 71.

LETTERS LISTED BY MOORE BUT NOT INCLUDED HERE

Moore 51 and 340 refer to letters which are brief and fragmentary or of doubtful validity. See under Moore 47 and 78 here, or better in Moore's volume. Moore 73, 145 and 527 are probably not by Psellos.

Excursuses 1–17

Dating the Letters

Psellos rarely uses precise dates in the *Chronographia*, and his letters are no better. They sometimes mention datable events, and can sometimes be dated to one reign, but this is not much use in longer reigns. Other letters show closeness to his student days, or express social or intellectual inferiority, or say that he wrote as a monk, all of which have dating implications; yet results are often trivial, uncertain, or controversial. Over half his letters cannot be dated directly, even in these limited ways. Equally, there are many complaints in modern scholarship over the lack of a biography for Psellos, to organize and contextualize the vital insights he gives into the world of the eleventh century. Special issues arise over the letters, which nearly always show a point of view limited by the knowledge and motivations of the moment of composition.¹ Such letters are more persuasive historically than his narratives like the *Chronographia*, which give an impression of design and redesign to serve developing rhetorical strategies. Letters are specially useful to historians when a context can be suggested for their writing.

In subjects like the history of science and philosophy, Psellos has in the past been treated as an eleventh-century link in chains stretching from Antiquity to the Renaissance, with no grounding at all in his own time. It is therefore very desirable to establish a biographical framework, to promote and continue the forging of synchronic links to match the diachronic chains. The problem is not a lack of biographical elements: they are everywhere in all his texts. What is missing is narrative sequencing and chronological arrangement to turn this

¹ In this, Psellos' letters seem to differ from the Byzantine norm. They are no more explicit and direct than other collections, and often play elusive epistolary games. But they still seem to say what they said at the moment when they were sent, even when they show their writer as ineffective, out of favour, or mistaken. There is no sign of subsequent authorial editing, or the making of a collection by another collector for eleventh-century purposes. See Papaioannou 2012a, esp. 305.

mass of data into a usable string of contexts. Thus the dating of his letters is at the same time very important and extremely difficult.²

Dating has been applied in this study in two stages. The first is a simple, direct attempt to find dates for letters and groups of letters: see excursuses 1–15. Results range from firm dating to fragile attempts which would not be made in projects better-supplied with evidence or less in need of a chronological framework. Criteria emerged from reading the corpus as a whole, not by arbitrarily imposing dating by decade, say, or reign. Once the possibilities of direct dating were exhausted, the situation was reassessed, including dating patterns established by the first stage. Are the so far undated letters, for example, likely to follow the same chronological pattern as those already dated? The second stage began by the definition and application to the corpus of a particular assumption—that around half the letters were written to set up and operate a network of non-military administrators: see excursuses 16–17.

The exhaustive search conducted by Stratis Papaioannou for signs of authorial editions of the letters ended in almost complete failure.³ This suggests that our extant manuscripts are compiled from the collections of many recipients. Such survivals are more likely to be representative of the total corpus of letters that Psellos wrote than those chosen by the author, like the surviving letters of Mauroπους.

Psellos is very interested in issues involving women, and famously enthusiastic to explore the feminine side of his own authorial personality. But he writes *about* women, he does not write *to* them, unless they are empresses. The correspondence is full of subordinates, especially *notarioi*, whose needs and problems loom large in many letters. But he writes about them to their employers and potential employers, he does not write directly to them. The overwhelming majority of his correspondents are non-military administrators. Many of those he helps in the letters are called his relatives, causing us to wonder how loose his definition of family might be. But the status of relative seems inadequate on its own to qualify a man to receive a letter—though if he receives one as an administrator, he will be reminded that he is related. In the church, Psellos writes mainly to metropolitans, and it is a surprise to discover the occasional letter to a mere bishop. Only among monks is his demand for status explicitly relaxed, with several letters to simple elderly monks whose character and language he says he finds very attractive. As we shall see, only one letter is addressed explicitly to a *strategos* and three to *doukai*.

The reasons for this exclusivity are not obvious. It runs against the general tone of the letters, which show unusual interest, as we have seen, in matters concerning the female half of humanity and the lower levels of the legal profession. Many of the thematic *kritai* to whom he addresses himself, and

² Jeffreys forthcoming.

³ Chronicled at length in Papaioannou 2012a.

the probable other *kritai* whose letters are now unaddressed, are those he has met during their education. But for me it is also significant that the body of thematic *kritai* was growing, and became more powerful throughout the two middle quarters of the eleventh century, with no obvious provision for the development of an *esprit de corps* and the provision of resources to replace the military system they were supplanting.⁴ As I was reading the letters, it seemed to me that there was a surprisingly large minority sent to such correspondents, perhaps 200 in all. A few of the earliest have clearly selfish purposes, to protect Psellos' monasteries in the theme of Opsikion. Many of the others represent the network of his ex-pupils, most of them now civilian administrators, as carefully detailed by Floris Bernard in Chapter 2. These two patterns merged, probably later, to take on the ethos of a network providing necessary services. I shall explore this possibility in what follows, setting up a separate dating framework, dependent on the validity of the assumptions on which it is based. Thus this dating process must maintain two important criteria: the distinction between direct dating and dating by network, and, in both categories, their position on the continuum between firm and fragile criteria.

Dating frameworks arising internally are inevitably not coherently arranged. They are treated here in several distinct excursuses. Direct dating in the following list precedes dating by network. Constant attention is paid to the certainty with which dates are proposed.

1. LETTERS SENT WITH GIFTS TO THE IMPERIAL FAMILY AND PATRIARCH (1060–7)

This seems at first a simple genre exclusive to the reign of Constantine X. Five such letters are addressed to Constantine (S 48, S 52, S 74, S 104, S 137), four to his empress Eudokia (KD 271–2, S 53, S 132), eight to his brother the *kaisar* Ioannes Doukas (G 26, KD 234–9, KD 260), and one to the patriarch Constantine Leichoudes (S 68). However, only two precise attributions derive from the mss, where most such letters have no heading, or just address the 'emperor' or 'empress'. More precise addresses are editorial conjectures of Sathas or Drexl. The latest editor, Gautier, left G 26 unaddressed, though it clearly belongs to the genre. One wonders whether this dated eleventh-century corpus is an invention of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The underlying custom is sketched in KD 260: dependents often sent gifts to superiors (represented by a second-person plural including Ioannes *kaisar*) on unspecified festivals. Psellos usually includes letters to praise the recipients and

⁴ See Glykatzki-Ahrweiler 1960, 67–78; Oikonomides 1976, esp. 148–9.

explain the gifts, which are mostly simple, natural products. Letters to the *kaisar* are slightly different, with semi-scientific descriptions of the products and simple analysis of their structure and use. To judge from other letters addressed to Ioannes, these will have appealed to him.

Closer inspection supports the attribution of these letters to the court of Constantine X, despite doubts expressed in the first paragraph of this excursus. The manuscripts explicitly address S 68 to Leichoudes and S 104 to a Doukas emperor married to Eudokia. Encomia in the letters to an emperor say nothing of military skills, which suggests Constantine and excludes likely alternatives. Letters to Eudokia resemble each other and Psellos' other encomia to her. Other empresses (Zoe, Theodora, or Isaakios I's Aikaterine) would need different encomia. Most such letters to Ioannes *kaisar* are preserved together (but unaddressed) in ms P (KD 234–9), preceded by KD 231–3, marked as to Ioannes both in their headings and by vocatives in the text. KD 260, which explains the custom, addresses the *kaisar* by a vocative, and gives him, correctly, two young children. The strongest argument for the dating of these letters to Constantine's reign is their unusual nature: nothing similar has survived in Psellos' oeuvre attached to any other time or family, so the loose ties mentioned here are persuasive.

2. THE LIZIX-SKLEROS GROUP (1060–5 AND C.1067 FOR LIZIX'S WIDOW)

Anastasios Lizix, a dear young friend of Psellos, first appears in S 10 (cf. P 1), as *patrikios* after Psellos left the monastery (1055–6). His dignity is given twice later as *vestarches* (KD 202, S 25). Before S 25 he was dead, after a long, paralysing illness. Gautier lists materials on Lizix's career in his edition of Psellos' funeral oration.⁵ But Gautier's conclusions make Lizix's life too long, as I shall suggest.

A later letter asks an emperor to transfer to Lizix Psellos' poor estate of Medikion (KD 202). Since Lizix was now *vestarches*, the emperor was probably already Constantine X and the date 1060 or later. Lizix's sickness and death affected Psellos badly, stopping his work, especially when in mourning. One letter (S 78) thanked one of the Dalassenos family for offering an office to the sick Lizix, and regulating reports on him sent to the emperor. Other letters concern Nikolaos Skleros, *krites* of Aegean Sea and Lizix's uncle. Psellos disagreed with him over the choice of a *notarios* (KD 128), and urged him to help the *hegoumenos* of the monastery Ta Narsou, of which Psellos was

⁵ Gautier 1978, 86–91.

charistikarios (KD 126–7, S 65, probably also S 135). Both issues, he says, disturbed his mourning. When later helping Nikolaos to retire, he reported an imperial refusal (KD 44, KD 37). The emperor, usually susceptible to charm, was briefly obsessed with war; later he seems emotional and indecisive. This suggests Constantine X, confirmed by mention in KD 37 of support of Nikolaos by Ioannes *kaisar*: this letter is vital evidence against Gautier’s biography of Lizix, and supports dating this group of letters to the early 1060s. Nikolaos retired happily (KD 63, KD 56). Lizix’s widow appears in K 2, without tears from Psellos, suggesting a date around the end of Constantine X’s reign. The other ten letters (KD 37, KD 44, KD 56, KD 63, KD 126–8, S 25, S 65, S 78) were written during the reign, with KD 202 at its very beginning.

3. THE YOUNG KRITES OF ARMENIAKON (1058–60, 1060–2 FOR THE MALESES LETTERS)

Eva de Vries-van der Velden found the eventual husband of Psellos’ adopted daughter Euphemia in a young *krites* of Armeniakon, over whom Psellos sent five letters in a few months.⁶ In three he asked experienced local metropolitans to watch over him: Ioannes Mauropous of Euchaita (KD 54) and the metropolitans of Amaseia (KD 58) and Neokaisareia (KD 57). The other two letters remind Mauropous (S 80) and his colleague of Amaseia (S 35) to report the young man’s progress. The identification of the *krites* as Psellos’ son-in-law is hard to prove. I think De Vries makes her case, but it would be unwise to use her conclusion to date other letters. However, this is unnecessary: the young *krites*, whoever he was, may be dated even if not identified, as she shows. S 35 refers to the abusive monk Sabbaites, who attacked everybody. Psellos replied to him in an equally rude poem, hoping that a new patriarch would stop him.⁷ This patriarch, De Vries shows, must be Constantine Leichoudes, enthroned in February, 1059, thus dating the letters. The link is valid, but maybe more complex than she makes it. A safer conclusion is that the *krites*’ appointment and the five letters should be dated between 1058 and 1060. De Vries traces the *krites*’ subsequent career in other groups of letters sent to *kritai*. I find these arguments less convincing, apart from one detail—the man’s name, Basileios Maleses. Hence I date KD 96 and KD 132, sent to him as *krites* of Armeniakon, to the early years of Constantine X. KD 76, to a Maleses, *krites* of Katotika, is a later possibility.

⁶ De Vries-van der Velden 1996a.

⁷ Michael Psellus, *Poemata*, ed. L.G. Westerink (Stuttgart; Leipzig 1992), XXI (= Psellus, *Poemata*).

4. THE MONK ELIAS (C.1065–8)

Nine letters survive addressed to different officials, warning of the arrival of this monk, who divided his time between Christ and the devil; Psellos told his friends to enjoy him.⁸ Perhaps there are ten: KD 212, repeated in one ms, addressed to two different correspondents, may have gone to both.⁹ Despite similar content, the letters must have covered several years, for Elias to reach all the destinations. One letter (G 27) speaks of Byzantine areas degraded by Turks, suggesting the 1060s or later. But there is no sign of the campaigns of Romanos IV, Mantzikert or its sequel. The one roughly datable letter is KD 8, to Nikephoritzes in the Peloponnese, where he arrived in 1068. The others (G 27, KD 93, KD 97, KD 98, KD 212, KD 270, S 153–4) should be dated to the last years of Constantine X or the first of Eudokia and Romanos.

5. PSELLOS' EX-STUDENTS

Psellos began teaching before 1040: some students started as young boys, others in their teens. Thus some may have reached their early twenties as administrators under Monomachos, before 1054. Probably Psellos gained more students after the grant of his chair of philosophy in 1047, a generation likely to reach maturity later. Each case must be dated on its merits. The educational dimensions of these relationships are left to Floris Bernard (Chapter 2).

Aristenos (c.1054–60; c.1065–8): Several anonymous Aristenoi emerge in the letters, in two cases called a pupil or 'child' of Psellos (G 24 and KD 224). This is probably one and the same person.¹⁰ He first appears as Psellos' pupil in a letter to his father (KD 224), probably in the second half of the 1050s. He was later sent at least two letters (G 24, KD 148) as *protoasekretis*, the second on campaign with Romanos IV in 1068, the first probably a little earlier.

Basileios Maleses (c.1058–72): See excursus 3.

Chasanes (decade of 1060s): This ex-pupil, whose name suggests a Muslim origin, received three letters (S 39, S 172, S 189) as *vestarches* and *krites* of Macedonia. They show Psellos' high opinion of his literary sensitivity. Psellos wrote S 172 as *proedros*, probably after 1057.

Constantine, nephew of Keroularios (c.1054–1078): (See excursus 10 and p. 66). At least one of his sons was also taught by Psellos (Sn 1).

⁸ Dennis 2003, 43–62.

⁹ Moore 2005, 192.

¹⁰ Note the different interpretation of the evidence by Floris Bernard at pp. 26–32.

Joseph (1057–mid 1060s?): An eloquent student (M 2–4, S 170, S 181) who served as a bridge between Psellos and Antioch, especially to Aimilianos the patriarch (see excursus 7).

Kyritses (1045–7): Psellos was stung by his criticism (KD 27–8, KD 209–10), suggesting a date before receiving his philosophical chair. It seems unlikely that the mature Psellos wrote letters documenting such insecurity before the attack of a student. Kyritses specialized in law, and after 1047 should presumably have been Xiphilinos' student until the latter resigned as *nomophylax*.

Nikephoros, nephew of Keroularios (c.1058–74): See p. 66.

Pothos, son of the droungarios/droungarea (c.1060–9): Pothos' self-presentation used two views of his parentage, based on father and mother respectively. I assume the *droungarios*-pattern came first, but then his father disappeared and the *droungarea*-pattern took over. This surprising matronymic surely reflects unusual affection for his mother or rejection of his father, or both. A key letter is KD 35, using the older *droungarios*-pattern. Psellos signs as *protoproedros*. The time of this appointment was c.1064–8 (excursus 9), suggesting that letters including the matronymic *droungarea* (KD 220, KD 250) were written near the end of the decade. Two patronymic addresses call him *krites* of Opsikion (KD 35, KD 39), but neither gives a dignity. These must be earlier, probably in the first half of the 1060s. However this is only a guess: it is obviously possible for a *krites* of Macedonia in 1070 to have been *krites* of Opsikion in, say, 1050.

Sergios Hexamilites (c.1065–8): Sergios has an extensive sigillographical record.¹¹ He is the addressee of G 27 (on the monk Elias) and K 2 (including Lizix's widow), both from the end of Constantine X's reign or shortly after, when he was *krites* of Thrakesion. Wassiliou, largely from the seals, dates his tenure of that office to the second half of the 1060s or early 1070s.

Others: Several more ex-students appear in the letters, including other important officials, together with nephews of old friends and three other *kritai*, of Drougoubiteia, Opsikion (another, as well as Pothos), and Paphlagonia. But these mentions are either discussed under the letters concerned, or bring no useful dating evidence.

The evidence of datable letters suggests that most of Psellos' ex-pupils did not become administrators till the 1060s. However the negative is unprovable: most, even those attested in the late 1060s, could have received letters from their ex-teacher before 1054.

¹¹ Wassiliou 2002, no. 17, pp. 253–7.

6. IOANNES DOUKAS KAISAR DURING AND AFTER THE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE X (1060–70)

Psellos' letters to Ioannes Doukas number thirty-six: Ioannes once collected them in volumes (G 5, KD 256). Eight are found in excursus 1, the other twenty-eight are listed here. In the *Chronographia*, it was Psellos who transferred symbols of rule to Constantine X from Isaakios I as he abdicated.¹² I have elsewhere questioned such pivotal scenes in Psellos' narrative, as enhancing literary enjoyment by spurious eyewitness narration rather than reporting facts.¹³ But in this case the *Chronographia* is supported by the letters, especially G 8, which shows Psellos reassuring Ioannes *kaisar* of his brother's support despite recent events. The brothers seem otherwise to have been close friends and allies in rule.

But their relationship with Psellos cooled. While many letters to Ioannes show a friendship working well, others imply alienation approaching total estrangement, though Psellos was always closer to Ioannes than to the emperor. Since the three started as close friends, it is tempting to arrange the letters by a narrative of steady estrangement; but there is little to justify this. Letters showing closeness are G 4–7, G 9, G 13, KD 101–2, KD 231–3, and S 63. Cooling relations are seen in G 10–11, KD 40, KD 213, S 72, and S 151–2. Letters showing near-breakdown are G 1–3 and KD 256. The other five letters to Ioannes (KD 186, KD 212, S 71, S 156) were written in 1068–70, after Constantine's death. The estrangement may also affect letters to other recipients, especially where Psellos and his correspondents expected success in persuading an emperor, but were disappointed, because Psellos now has much less power than will (KD 46, KD 49, KD 79, KD 85, S 93, S 110). A cliché, using nouns or verbs to contrast his limited power with his strong will, is regularly used, adding to the dating evidence. These passages may be used as limited support for dating these letters in Constantine X's reign, probably towards its end.

7. PATRIARCHS OF ANTIOCH

Psellos wrote fourteen surviving letters to patriarchs of Antioch. The manuscripts address M 2–4 specifically to Aimilianos, showing a learned patriarch, known to Psellos in the capital before his election. After reaching Antioch, he waited some time before writing to Psellos. But when the letters came, Psellos welcomed them as (he said) showing a supreme stylist in Greek. None of the other letters has a named recipient. Some (G 12, KD 138, S 181) address a familiar, dynamic, learned patriarch, probably Aimilianos. In others (KD

¹² Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VII 103 (A 11), 3–7.

¹³ Jeffreys 2010.

134–5, KD 139, S 42) Psellos introduces himself as if unknown, or adds simplistic explanations, e.g. that Socrates was a Hellenic philosopher. The recipient of these letters was presumably a predecessor of Aimilianos, leaving them undated. G 22–3, KD 88, and S 61 are indeterminate.

At least two patriarchs are involved, so that Gautier was unwise to try to fit all the letters into one career.¹⁴ Aimilianos is well known after 1074 as leading Antioch's anti-Byzantine party. He later was taken to the capital, helped overthrow Michael VII, and died just after Psellos, who thus had no chance to write to a successor.¹⁵ Before 1074, these letters may add something to the little known of Aimilianos and the Greek patriarchate of Antioch in the 1060s.¹⁶ His enthronement is traditionally dated c.1062. In Psellos' letters, despite Aimilianos' strength, there is no sign of his later anti-Byzantine sentiment. I therefore date letters addressed to him to c.1064–8, allowing for initial silence (1062–4) and later development of opposition to Byzantium (1068–74). Among the undated letters, KD 135 may refer to plural emperors: if so, it was written in 1060 or later. In S 42 Psellos possibly refers to his philosophy 'chair', but he could have done this at any time after 1047.

8. ZOMAS (ZOMES) KRITES OF OPSIKION

Zomas is discussed as an unusual early case, a thematic *krites* addressed by Psellos in the 1050s. The reason is clear: some of Psellos' early monasteries were in Opsikion, and he petitioned Zomas for the most favourable tax regime the law allowed, especially in the future when he himself would be in a monastery. The two forms of Zomas' name appear in three letters. In the earliest (S 29) Psellos claims to have written to Zomas often before, and discusses his new monastery of Medikion, as well as plans for tonsure. He asks for local advice over the regular dilemma of the *charistikarios*, whether substantial investment in Medikion might produce useful harvests.¹⁷ The rest of the letter politely requests Zomas not to exercise his right to costly hospitality at Medikion, a plea repeated around a year later in KD 140, accusing Zomas of issuing judgements against Medikion, favouring a neighbour who was a minor but a charlatan. These letters may be dated to c.1052–3. S 190 is harder to date. Zomas was ill, wishing to retire and be tonsured, but the emperor refused to lose so efficient a man, and won an argument over him against Psellos and the *logothetes* Ioannes. Psellos, as an expert on tonsure,

¹⁴ Gautier 1986, 113–16.

¹⁵ His career is best seen in Bryennios (ed. Gautier), 201.18–205.13, 245.2–247.9. For his death see Skylitzes Continuatus (ed. Tsolakis), 185.18–19.

¹⁶ Todt 2005, 607–9.

¹⁷ On the *charistike* system, see pp. 46–7.

advised Zomas how to proceed. Does Psellos' expertise mean that he was already a monk? In that case the emperor cannot be Monomachos. Ioannes remained *logothetes* under Theodora, maybe even under Michael VI; but it is hard to accept the emperor of S 190 as Michael, much less any later ruler. Thus S 190 should be dated to 1053–4: Psellos' expertise on tonsure simply means that he is already involved in the process. Zomas' situation would be repeated a decade later in the case of Nikolaos Skleros.¹⁸ These parallel cases add to the credibility of narratives in which Xiphilinos and Psellos have to feign sickness to escape the service of Constantine IX.

9. PSELLOS' DIGNITIES AND OFFICES, AS SEEN IN HIS LETTERS

Psellos is attested in the late 1040s and 1050s as *vestes* (S 88–9) and *vestarches*.¹⁹ (S 88 is a problem, because the recipient and other aspects of the letter point to the late 1060s.) Psellos was made *proedros* by Isaakios I in 1057, and later became *protoproedros*, probably in c.1064–8 (KD 35, S 184, Sp 1). In the last months of his life in 1078 he was promoted again by Botaneiates, but our only record gives no details (G 21).²⁰ Besides conventional dignities he held an unusual series of personal titles. In 1047 he probably became *proedros of the philosophers*.²¹ Another title, *hypatos (consul) of the philosophers*, appeared in the early 1050s,²² perhaps because *proedros* was then starting to be used as another title. There was probably no clean break from one philosophical title to the other. After tonsure, he defended himself against criticism for his secular title *proedros* (S 108). His last personal title was *hypertimos*, first attested twice in 1068 (KD 147, KD 261), after Romanos IV rushed to Anatolia after coronation, too quickly for unusual civilian promotions. *Hypertimos* was almost certainly given him by Constantine X, introduced as specially appropriate for a monk; the title in subsequent centuries recognized help outside that usually expected from a cleric. It too was criticized.²³ However he probably used it more than *protoproedros* (KD 147, KD 261, KD 268, S 167,

¹⁸ See excursus 2.

¹⁹ C. Will, *Acta et scripta quae de controversiis ecclesiae graecae et latinae saeculo undecimo composita extant* (Leipzig; Marburg 1861) (=Will 1861), 166.4–167.26. Michael Psellus, *Orationes forenses et acta*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart; Leipzig 1994), 143–54, l. 3.

²⁰ Jeffreys 2014 and pp. 87–8.

²¹ Attaleiates (eds. Kaldellis and Krallis) 5.5. This form of the title seems to be reflected at S 155 under Monomachos, M 7 just before tonsure, and KD 198 perhaps soon after he left the monastery in 1055.

²² Will 1861, 166.13–14.

²³ See his speech *Πρὸς τοὺς βασκίγαντας αὐτῷ τῆς τοῦ ὑπερτίμου τιμῆς*, in Michael Psellus, *Oratoria minora* (ed. Littlewood), no. 9, pp. 37–40.

and in the titles to several of his writings). *Hypertimos* and *hypatos of the philosophers* were the titles identifying him after death.

10. DIGNITIES AND OFFICES OF CONSTANTINE, NEPHEW OF THE PATRIARCH KEROULARIOS

Constantine's *cursus honorum* was also unusual. He (and his brother Nikephoros) were surrogates for their uncle, being promoted and demoted by Isaakios I as Keroularios fluctuated in imperial favour. When Keroularios helped in Isaakios' accession, his nephews were splendidly promoted, but when Isaakios arrested Keroularios, they lost their titles. When Keroularios was posthumously rehabilitated, the nephews received even higher favours.²⁴ If an emperor rewards a patriarch by promoting his relatives, the promotions must surely be greater than expected on their own merits. From pp. 62–3, I quote my proposed dates when Constantine reached titles attested in letters listed after each title. I add in brackets dates proposed by Alexandra Wassiliou-Seibt.²⁵

1057: *Magistros* and *sakellarios*, S 45–6 (c.1065).

1059: *Proedros*, KD 31 (c.1066–7).

c.1068–70: *Protoproedros*, S 184 (1071–2).

c.1072: *Protoproedros* and one or more from the complex group of offices including the word *droungarios*: S 1, S 83–4 (c.1074).

After 1074, probably 1078: *Protoproedros* and *epi ton kriseon*: G 21 (not addressed to Constantine, according to Wassiliou-Seibt).

1078: *Sebastos* and *epi ton kriseon*, KD 214 (1075–8).

11. ECCLESIASTICAL DISFAVOUR AND PERSECUTION

Psellos was an outspoken student of pagan Greek literature, breaking the normal discursive boundaries of Byzantine writing on ancient religion and philosophy. He may have been a serious problem for the church, if, as credibly suggested, his lectures were used by learned candidates for the priesthood.²⁶ Ecclesiastical reaction may divide schematically into two levels, disfavour and persecution, the second involving real pain. This dimension of his life is downplayed in the *Chronographia* and the funerary eulogies of patriarchs,

²⁴ Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VII 65.

²⁶ Kaldellis 2005.

²⁵ Wassiliou-Seibt 2012a.

narratives which would have provided chronological sequence. The letters suggest he was in disfavour but not persecuted before tonsure and departure to Olympos in 1054. The strongest evidence is the complete absence of persecution or even disfavour from letters written as he prepared for tonsure and lived as a monk at court. These include five to Xiphilinos already on Olympos (KD 191, KD 273, M 5, S 37, S 44), three to Zomas, *krites* of Opsikion (excursus 8), four responding to advice and questions from others, one a severe archimandrite from Olympos (KD 170, KD 267, S 101, S 185) and two planning his return to court after tonsure (S 114–5). It is unlikely that, if Psellos was under serious pressure from the church, he would have hidden it from all these different correspondents. Three letters to Keroularios dated before 1054 complain of disfavour, with no sign of persecution (C 2 and S 159–60). Letters detailing real persecution are only three: M 16 and S 139 to Keroularios and S 118, thanking Leon Paraspondylos for friendship in a crisis. The first two show Psellos as a monk, after 1054; M 16 also mentions support from the empress Theodora. S 139 is the most explicit over persecution. It may have lasted for years,²⁷ its chief personalities were three (identified by nickname), the patriarch's henchmen; the place of persecution was the church, and its climax was a meeting of clerics (presumably the synod), who poured over him a whole fruit-salad of accusations. This involved not a private sin but a public crime: the syntax seems to be attacking the synod, but the thought makes better sense applied to the synod's view of Psellos' actions.

12. LEON PARASPONDYLOS AND PSELLOS' ATTEMPTS TO RETURN TO SECULAR LIFE

One of the most confusing narratives emerging from the letters is the relationship between Psellos and Leon Paraspondylos the *protosynkellos*. Leon is addressed by Psellos as an old acquaintance with philosophical interests and the religious dimension also implied by his title. He had been important in the administration of Michael IV, but was excluded from power by Constantine IX. However, Theodora on her accession in 1055 suddenly appointed Leon as her all-powerful *mesazon*, and he remained in office under Michael VI. He played a major role in provoking the eastern generals to revolt in favour of Isaakios I. Leon was dismissed during the negotiations following Isaakios' victory in the civil war, before Michael's abdication in 1057. There is a contentious suggestion that Psellos' letters provide evidence for later details

²⁷ The word used, *ἐπετείως*, is unexpected, and seems to indicate yearly persecutions. See pp. 45–6.

of his story during Isaakios' reign. This last suggestion reflects one of two views on the chronological relationship of Psellos' letters to Leon's biography, that proposed by J.N. Ljubarskij.²⁸ The other theory, as set out by Eva de Vries-van der Velden,²⁹ proposes earlier dates for the events assigned by Ljubarskij to Isaakios' reign, and assumes that his career ended just before Isaakios' accession. A careful survey of the evidence has led me to prefer the second theory (though not all its details, most of which are irrelevant here). I shall foreground that version of the narrative here, but also mention Ljubarskij's ideas, which cannot be dismissed.

The key to the problem is establishing the corpus of letters relevant to Leon. Some mss.³⁰ name him as recipient of a letter by first name and title (S 7) or second name and title (KD 72, KD 87, KD 185, S 118), or just by his title (M 6, P 1, S 9). Others, addressed to third persons or unaddressed, involve a man who may in some way be identified as Leon (KD 71, S 10, S 11, S 198, S 199). For those including a name and title, attribution to the man whose biography is sketched above is usually assumed. Most commentators also link M 6, P 1, and S 9 to the same addressee, not the only *protosynkellos* to whom Psellos writes, but the only one for whom that title seems so dominant a feature of his identification as to form an independent address; all three letters have other features confirming the attribution. Difficulties arise in four cases where Leon may appear in letters not addressed to him, and neither his name nor his title is mentioned.³¹

KD 71 is addressed to the patriarch (probably Michael Keroularios). It mentions an *ex-hegoumenos*, claiming that he remains the patriarch's supporter. His identification as Leon is confirmed by KD 72 (to Leon), which follows it in the ms., with some similar content.

S 11 indicates in one ms. that the recipient is the same as that of the preceding text in the ms., a satirical work which seems to have little or nothing in common with S 11. In its other ms., S 11 is unaddressed, but follows four consecutive letters on the lists above which may be addressed to Leon. It is tempting to transpose the link found in one ms. to operate in the other, thus addressing the letter to Leon. The addressee, Psellos says, once was a philosopher devoted to learned writing. Psellos has now tried various ways to make him reply to his letters. He fears that the reason for the other's silence is that he has forgotten philosophy and learning, in his sudden acquisition of wealth and power. He now has assumed the activities and mindset of the rich. If he wishes

²⁸ Best set out in Ljubarskij 2004, 140–9.

²⁹ See De Vries-van der Velden 1999.

³⁰ For ms. evidence for what follows, see Moore 2005, accessed by the Moore number beneath each summary.

³¹ S 10, not addressed to Leon, discusses a difficult letter to be written to a prominent *protosynkellos*, probably identified as Leon by the argument used above.

to retain the respect of Psellos and others, he should try harder to mix his old concerns with his new situation.

S 198 and S 199 are both addressed to an otherwise unknown *magistros* Psephas, in similar situations. They are dated by a reference in S 198 to an *αὐτοκράτωρ βασιλῆς*, who must be Theodora: the other possibility, Eudokia, is not recorded with this title, and is unlikely to have used it, as she always ruled together with a husband and/or one or more of her sons. The text refers to the need to petition an ex-friend of Psellos, a fellow philosopher, who has suddenly been put in charge of the palace, but has bitterly disappointed Psellos; the latter now asks his friend Psephas to approach this man and beg, in an undignified way if necessary, for a better job than the trimenon of Papa-Sabinos which has been offered him. Who could be the object of this petition but Leon Paraspondylos?

I believe all these letters refer to Leon. It is surprising that Ljubarskij ignores the claims of S 198–9, which are almost certainly relevant, and of S 11, where it is very likely, while making much of KD 71, a weaker identification.

When we try to date the correspondence, S 118 reveals a moment of despair from Psellos, when he was being persecuted by the church, probably early in Theodora's reign (1055), as he left Olympos (see excursus 10). S 198–9, supported by S 11, should be dated a little later in Theodora's reign (1055–6), when Psellos sought a position with the help of his old friend Leon, presumably to re-establish himself in secular life as a monk outside the monastery. He seems at first to have had no reply, and may have tried to elicit one by taking the offensive towards Leon in S 11. The eventual offer (S 198–9) is so trivial as to be insulting. He asks for help from his friend Psephas, who, he hopes, has some influence over Leon. There is no sign that this indirect, undignified approach improved the offer.

Around these fixed dates we must arrange the rest of the letters. This is difficult, particularly because, as Diether Reinsch shows in this volume (Chapter 6), Psellos seems unable to speak of Leon without a layer of irony. This applies both to letters written to gain an office from the successful Leon under Theodora and Michael VI, and those sent to console the unsuccessful Leon under Constantine IX (De Vries) or Isaakios I (Ljubarskij). They are dominated by praise of the *protosynkellos* which seems insincere, particularly when compared to the negative picture of Leon from the *Chronographia*. Other rhetorical texts addressed to Leon, like the notorious *Λόγος χαρακτηρίζων τὴν τοῦ πρωτοσυγκέλλου ἀρετὴν*³² far from clarifying the situation, have increased the confusion. There are very few dating possibilities beyond those discussed earlier.

³² Psellos, *Orationes panegyricae*: Michael Psellus, *Orationes panegyricae*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart; Leipzig 1994), no. 15. For analysis of the confusion it may cause see Reinsch in this volume, Chapter 6.

We are left with the balance between the De Vries and Ljubarskij frameworks for the failed part of Leon's career. Lack of evidence restricts discussion to generalities. In favour of De Vries is the fact that Leon was certainly in the capital and disappointed before 1055. However, the setback for which Psellos consoles him sounds more like a recent event than a long-term disappointment dating back to 1042–3. But as we know very little of Leon before 1055, it is easy to imagine an appropriate event in the early 1050s, for example an unsuccessful attempt by Leon to ingratiate himself with Constantine IX. To say this is, of course, to explain away an anomaly in a way which is plausible, but unsupported by surviving evidence.

The Ljubarskij hypothesis may be discussed in a more concrete way. First, there is a convincing counter-narrative which ends Leon's career in 1057. He played an important role in provoking the civil war won by Isaakios I, Isaakios demanded his dismissal in negotiations to spare the capital a sack, and he was presumably dismissed. Leon was a monk: he had only to choose the monastery into which to retire. But Ljubarskij uses KD 71 to continue the narrative in a different way, showing Psellos supporting Leon in an attempt to gain Keroularios' favour, presumably with the ultimate aim of rehabilitating him before Isaakios. I find this scenario rather unlikely. First, the identification of Leon as the anonymous *ex-hegoumenos* of KD 71, though more likely than not, is far from sure. Then the three people involved with him in the negotiation envisaged by Ljubarskij all had different reasons to dislike him intensely. The strongest opponent will have been Isaakios, who made him a major target of a successful revolt and bloody civil war. The character of Isaakios is consistently seen by Psellos as determined, impatient, and uncompromising.³³ This would not encourage the others to plan Leon's rehabilitation. Psellos, as Reinsch shows, was unable to speak of Leon without a sneer, and his attitude will not have been sweetened by the insulting job-offer received in 1055. Keroularios would have seen Leon as the man of Theodora, the empress whose legitimacy to rule he doubted and with whom he nearly came to an open breach,³⁴ and of Michael VI, the failed emperor whose abdication he had masterminded. The time-frame was also limited: Isaakios ended it by having Keroularios arrested within some eighteen months of his accession. Much of the reign had been spent on active campaigning. I think it is very likely that the period of Leon's suffering and exclusion prominent in M 6, S 8, and to some extent elsewhere reflects the end of the reign of Constantine IX. Over other letters largely containing ironic eulogies of Leon (e.g. KD 87, KD 185, S 7, S 9) it is hard to be certain; I have left their dates in doubt as '1053–6'.

³³ Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VII 51.1–33, 60.1–64.9; Psellos, 'Funeral Oration for Keroularios', 53.11–55.36.

³⁴ Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VI 220 (A 17), 1–10; Psellos, 'Funeral Oration for Keroularios', 46.21–37.

13. TO AND FROM OLYMPOS

It is uncertain when Psellos left for Olympos in 1054. On 20 July he is recorded with his baptismal name Konstas at the synod which excommunicated the papal envoys.³⁵ He was then tonsured and lived briefly as a monk at court (S 37, S 114–15). He cannot have left before September. The *terminus ante quem* is unclear: he sometimes claims to have departed before Monomachos' death in the second week of 1055, sometimes to have waited till the emperor died.³⁶ He then spent nearly a year on Olympos. The verse mocking him for not lasting a year away from females (and/or goddesses) guarantees that the time was nearly a year. If it had been less, the lines would be different.³⁷ He wrote several works on the mountain. But we also see him in the *Chronographia* advising Theodora before and after her accession in January 1055, visiting her so often as to cause jealousy.³⁸ Is this fiction for literary effect, or should we postpone his departure, say, to the end of January? I prefer fiction, but hesitantly. After leaving Olympos, three other narratives must be included before he returned to public life in August 1057, chosen by Michael VI for an embassy to Isaakios I after the battle of Polemon-Hades. One is the trial by which he freed his adopted daughter Euphemia from her failed engagement to Elpidios Kenchres, confirmed by Theodora in August, 1056.³⁹ The other two narratives are those of excursuses 11 and 12. But which came first, the accusations before the synod or the humiliating wait for a job? The only link between the two narratives is S 118. There, he is in despair as persecution by the church reaches a climax. Yet he thanks Leon for support, calling him his one remaining friend. This may be flattery to secure a job, but it shows that relations with him had not yet broken down: thus persecution by the church probably came first. He may have been attacked as soon as he revealed plans to leave Olympos. This not only broke rules, but also abandoned his last defence. He had given up imperial service in favour of monastic asylum, then relinquished that too.

³⁵ Will 1861, 166.4–167.26.

³⁶ At Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VI 213 (A 10), 1–6, he was accused of using the occult to predict Constantine's death: it is essential for the narrative that he left before Constantine died. At Michael Psellus, *Orationes funebres* I (ed. I. Polemis) no. 3, 16.4–8, (henceforward 'Psellos, *Funeral oration for Xiphilinos*') the emperor died before he left.

³⁷ Psellus, *Poemata XXI* gives a 2-line form which is more convincing than the 4 lines seen in XXII.

³⁸ Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Reinsch), VI 216–17 (A 13–14).

³⁹ Though a principal in the trial, he wrote an apparently official report of it. This was recently deconstructed (Jenkins 2006, 131–51) as telling Psellos' side of the story in an interesting but false frame which reveals its falsity to informed readers. Though he lost the verdict and paid a fine, he achieved his aims. It is one of the last dated documents confirmed by Theodora before her death at the end of the month. Is this another hint of falsity for those who knew details of her last days?

14. PSELLOS AS LOBBYIST—AND IMPERIAL REACTIONS

A major role for Psellos was representing others before the emperor—in effect, lobbying. This subject, of course, has a long history in Byzantium. I shall restrict myself to comparing Psellos' interaction with the two Constantines, IX and X. Lobbying Constantine IX is seen in KD 158 and S 190. In S 190, Psellos and a colleague sought leave for Zomas to retire (see excursus 8), the same application he made a decade later for Nikolaos Skleros. Constantine IX soon defeated them. In Psellos' words: 'καὶ ἐπεὶ μὴ ἰσοπαλεῖς οἱ ἀγωνιζόμενοι, κρίσιν ἔσχηκεν ἡ πάλῃ ταχεῖαν, καὶ ὁ μείζων νενίκηκεν.'

With Constantine X, expectations were different. Compare Psellos' lobbying for Nikolaos Skleros (KD 37, KD 44, KD 56, KD 63). He prepared for siege warfare on the imperial castle, with any allies available. He chose his moment to attack, for Constantine did not listen if busy on something else. He used emotional pressure, hoping for the emperor to change colour or become tearful. Psellos' experience could sometimes now declare victory, but he warned clients not to expect quick results. Constantine was less emotional in writing than in speech. Even when letters were written, they might not be sent: he waited for the right time. This combination of narrative clichés and indecisive character forms a forensic identikit picture, to recognize Constantine X and date other letters to his reign: KD 41, KD 48, KD 80, KD 85, KD 123, S 93, and S 97. The dating is confirmed for KD 41 by the presence of Pothos (see excursus 5), for KD 80 by Ioannes *kaisar*, while the heading of KD 123 may be a formal address to the same Nikolaos Skleros. Details of this picture, if not convincing by themselves, can confirm dates set in other ways, as in KD 46. Constantine X was an indecisive man, but unlikely to force his courtiers to plot tonsure because of his dangerous unpredictability.

15. EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES TO WRITING AND READING LITERATURE

Several letters make fruitful exploration of epistolography as a category close to modern ideas of literature, through various metaphors. Most of the letters below are already dated to the reign of Constantine X or later, and none shows signs of an earlier date. I think these were mature literary ventures, all to be dated after 1060. They are some of the most memorable letters of the corpus. (Note that some appear under more than one heading).

15.1 Metaphors of exchange

The best (S 171),⁴⁰ exchanges a letter for a mule, via complex verbal similarities. G 10 compares epistolography to paid singing before an audience; G 24 swaps textiles, discussing comparative prices; G 9 and KD 75 exchange letters for food and KD 242 for game; S 85 accesses power through letters; S 172 matches the value of gold; S 189 compares gratitude with inspiration. All speculate playfully with letters as creations with solid value on scales more widely recognized than literary worth.

15.2 Psellos under the pressure of reception

Four letters show the importance of Psellos' response to positive reception, and the different ways it operated, using some striking images: G 5, S 51, S 85, S 117.

15.3 Questions of gender

Papaioannou 2013, 192–231, shows Psellos varying his authorial gender to great effect. The following list includes some of his examples, but also shows Psellos' determination to include female subjects and his inventive use of imagery involving the female: KD 201, S 49, S 83–4, S 116–17, S 157, S 178. These cases seem only to have increased after he lost his daughter and wife, then became a monk.

15.4 Letters priming virtuous circles

Letters under this heading are less memorable than 15.1–3, nor so persuasive for dating purposes. They explore ways in which the niceties of epistolary *philia*—request, fulfilment, and gratitude leading to more requests—could set off an automatic path to progress in friendship. The key motive force is produced when gratitude is greater than the fulfilment of the request deserves: KD 131, KD 167, KD 173, KD 249, KD 262, M 11, S 127, S 141.

15.5 Excursuses 1–15: conclusions

The surviving corpus of Psellos' letters covers his whole adult life, from teenage student days in the 1030s to shortly before he died in 1078. But

⁴⁰ See Bernard 2011.

dated letters do not cover the period evenly. ‘Dated letters’ comprise those included in the excursuses above and others, e.g. uncontroversial letters to reigning emperors, or the more intellectual drama of his relationship to Ioannes Mauropous, analysed by Marc Lauxtermann in this volume (Chapter 5).

Dated letters are rather sparse before he began to think of tonsure after 1050, and, more surprisingly, after he returned from Romanos IV’s second Anatolian expedition in 1069. In part this depends on the absence before 1050 and after 1069 of datable crises in his personal life, like tonsure, the return from the monastery to public life, or the sudden loss of friends who followed Romanos in 1068. The rapid turnover of rulers from the death of Constantine IX to the accession of Constantine X also facilitates dating in that period. Perhaps the small numbers of letters datable to other times is due to the lack of datable events to which to tie them. However this cannot be the whole explanation. The most productive period for his dated letters is the reign of Constantine X, when little can be said of Psellos’ personal life. Much of the dating to that time is based on the presence of the imperial family as correspondents and subjects for letters (e.g. excursuses 1 and 6). If there had been the same number of letters written, say, under Michael VII, events after Mantzikert, seen through the imperial family and that of Ioannes *kaisar*, offered even better possibilities for dating. I can see little reason to reject the assumption that the distribution of undated letters resembles that of the dated.

At all dates, letters often present themselves as parts of longer conversations. The number of ‘lost’ letters—mentioned in surviving texts but not preserved—seems roughly equal between dated and undated letters, throughout Psellos’ career. Thus, insofar as overall statistics help to date undated letters, they imply that many of the undated were written under Constantine X.

16. PSELLOS’ NETWORK OF NON-MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS

As I have already foreshadowed, I think a large proportion of Psellos’ letters show him developing and using a network of non-military administrators. This will be the subject of the next stage of my study of the letters, to be published elsewhere. There I will try to integrate this network within the development of eleventh-century political culture. Here I merely state some basic parameters affecting dating. The core of the network comprises thematic *kritai* (or *praitores* or *kouratores*, where these titles were used). More than one hundred are addressed, by name or office, covering most themes under

non-military control in the mid-eleventh century.⁴¹ In other cases the address is missing or imprecise, but it is clear that the recipient is a major judicial official outside the capital with appropriate subordinates (e.g. thematic *notarioi*)⁴²—just like *kritai* in fully addressed letters. In such cases editors often add ‘*krites*’ by conjecture in the title. Whatever the right editorial practice, most of these correspondents were surely *kritai*. Many of Psellos’ pupils joined this profession, strengthening the bonds which held Psellos’ network together. It sometimes also used the episcopate and secular office-holders from the capital, especially when they travelled in the provinces—e.g. accompanying Romanos IV into Anatolia. Only one letter is addressed to a military *strategos*, and three to holders of the title ‘*doux*’,⁴³ which was more integrated into both civil and military administrations. The exclusive concentration on the civilian administration seems a set policy, almost a job description for the writer. The fact that Psellos knew many of those concerned, by this logic, may explain why he was chosen to write the letters, rather than reflecting chance acquaintanceship. Most of the letters using the network cannot be dated, even by the varied methods used in the excursuses.

As these are Byzantine letters, the network is presented as a group of friends, in a web organized round Psellos, unified by the concept of friendship: *philia*. This, the framework in which Byzantines viewed links forged by epistolography, has recently been extensively analysed and evaluated in a series of studies which seem likely to continue.⁴⁴ While recognizing the importance of this general research and using its results, I will not contribute to it here. Full explication of the Byzantine convention must be accompanied by research into its use by individual writers, especially in major collections like that of Psellos. How might the methods and goals of Psellos’ network be expressed using twenty-first-century conventions? This is not so much the removal of a distorting mirror as its replacement by modern distortions, more familiar to readers of this book. I shall organize excursuses 16 and 17 around the assumption that Psellos at a date to be discussed used this network to offer a range of semi-official services to non-military administrators throughout the

⁴¹ Aegean (Sea), Anatolikon, Armeniakon, Boleron, Boukellarion, Cappadocia, Charsianon, Drougoubiteia, Katotika (Hellas and Peloponnesos), Kibyrraioton, Macedonia, Opsikion, Optimaton, Paphlagonia, Thrace, Thrace and Macedonia, Thrakesion.

⁴² Imperial *notarioi* and *protonotarioi*, and others from bureaux in the capital, are excluded here.

⁴³ A *doux* of Antioch probably received both KD 43 and KD 62, a civilian succeeding where military men had failed. This was almost certainly Nikephoritzes (see Todt 2005, 607–9). On the title see Cheynet 1985, 181–94.

⁴⁴ The best brief introductions to epistolography and its bibliography are M. Mullett in E. Jeffreys et al. 2008, 882–93 and S. Papaioannou in Stephenson 2010, 188–99. In Mullett’s bibliography note particularly her own publications, the methodological introduction of P. Hatlie, and the works of M. Grünbart which provide vital infrastructure for the field.

areas of the empire's provinces where they operated. Note that I am not using 'network' in the sense in which it is sometimes employed, covering all the correspondents with whom a writer of letters communicates.⁴⁵ Here it means a defined subset of those correspondents.

On the operation of this network, I am sure that sometimes the conventions give an accurate and sufficient explanation of the motivation of a letter—Psellos was approached by a friend or relative for help and wrote to another friend who had the power to give that help, expecting him to respond, prompted by the obligations of *philia*. But I have no doubt that in many other cases the categories of friend and family were severely stretched to adapt the situation to the convention. A few of Psellos' letters encourage the thought that the boundaries were in some cases pushed so far as to become virtually meaningless. Equally, Psellos often discusses duties imposed by *philia*, contrasting it with imperial power. But he also (consciously or not) reminds the *kritai* that he is in the capital, with more or less assurance of the emperor's ear, by sometimes revealing imperial policy affecting them, and even claiming to be setting it.⁴⁶

I think that Psellos helped *kritai* find *notarioi* and other subordinates, and assisted subordinates to find themes in which to work; that he sent details about cases due to come up in the *krites*' court, usually via a litigant, when he could give or confirm useful information of which the *krites* might be ignorant; that in contrast with his early letters, which dealt with his own tax minimalization or avoidance, he later strongly supported the *kritai* and their subordinates in their important role in tax collection—though personal interest remained paramount in a minority of later letters; that at times he showed confidence that his letters reflected imperial policy, even down to minor details, implying the use of imperial power, while generally using different conventions associated with *philia*; that he often gave the *kritai* advice on the balance needed between the administration of justice and making some money, which he regarded as their most important professional problem; that even the visits of the monk Elias were presented as chances for the harassed legal executive to relax. I shall examine each of these subjects in turn, particularly its implications for dating his letters to the network.

⁴⁵ For the following I do not include their letters in the network without special evidence: the imperial family, Constantine Leichoudes, Constantine nephew of Keroularios, Ioannes Mauropous, Ioannes Xiphilinos, Leon Paraspondylos, Michael Keroularios the patriarch, and his nephew Nikephoros. With these I feel that Psellos' attitude is nearly always very personal, as old friend, dependant or suppliant. Exceptions are KD 54 and S 80, where Mauropous is asked to watch over a *krites* of Armeniakon.

⁴⁶ Good examples are S 76 and S 129.

16.1 Uses of the network: services covering notarioi and other subordinates

It must have been hard for *kritai* in themes far from Constantinople to identify and assess potential new subordinates. Most sources of training were in the capital. Psellos often sends his correspondents *notarioi* and others with letters of recommendation, so frequently that KD 155 forms an elaborate joke, wondering how the recipient survived the shock of receiving yet another *notarios* from Psellos (the joke implies that the process was routine).

Early evidence: The *notarios* employed by Ioannes Mauropous in 1047 (M 12) was presumably in the capital with no connection to a theme. None of the 26 references to thematic *notarioi* and *protonotarioi* is firmly dated before 1060 (KD 61, KD 73, KD 86, KD 109–10, KD 118, KD 128, KD 131, KD 142, KD 144, KD 153, KD 155, KD 157, KD 173–4, KD 248, KD 254, S 34, S 39, S 47, S 66–7, S 98, S 127, S 136, S 142). There are around twenty other letters recommending employees not called *notarioi*, some of them in the ecclesiastical sphere (KD 74, KD 90–1, KD 100, KD 111, KD 122, KD 165, KD 175, KD 220, KD 262, S 43, S 64, S 100, S 126, S 140–1, S 147, S 179, S 193–4).

Later evidence: Some letters on these lists have been dated after 1060 (KD 111, KD 128, KD 220, S 39). Nearly all the rest would be undated by any direct criteria. It is sometimes hard to say whether a request for help involves employment or something else: I have tried to avoid cases not implying employment. It must also have been hard for *kritai* to trace subordinates who suddenly left the theme to visit sick relatives, and then to assess their reasons. Some such men returned to their themes with a note from Psellos in the capital certifying the seriousness of the illness involved (e.g. S 39, S 98).

The numerous cases in 16.1, nearly all involving two persons in the category of ‘friend’, found in letters surviving from a total which was probably once much larger, suggest to me the systematic provision of help rather than the operation of existing relationships of *philia*. Beside the situation mentioned earlier where the Byzantine convention fully explains the case, I expect there to be others where modern conventions would suggest a letter like this: ‘Dear X—You will remember our discussion before you left for your theme when I promised to give all possible help in your work (confirmed by my recent letter). My records (and a rumour) suggest that you now need a *notarios*. The man carrying this letter applied to me for help: he has been interviewed, seems well qualified, and has the right references for competence and honesty. He belongs to a family with a link to mine, and family sources report nothing bad of him. I hope this recommendation is enough to get him the job, so that both of you may prosper: this will also help to establish the network we are setting up, which

I hope you agree is a useful development.’ Similar modern letters, *mutatis mutandis*, could be written for subsequent paragraphs here.

16.2 Uses of the network: judicial information

It was always difficult to evaluate oral testimony and documents produced in Byzantine courts, especially far from the capital, the centre of judicial discussion and documentation. When a litigant appeared from outside the theme with oral or documentary evidence on which a case might stand or fall, a *krites* must frequently have felt helpless, and forced into arbitrary decisions. More than thirty letters may be read as practical help sent by Psellos to various *kritai* potentially in this situation. The carrier was often a potential litigant, bringing a letter summarizing the facts of the case, sometimes including judicial advice (KD 50–2, KD 60, KD 65–6, KD 73, KD 78, KD 81, KD 84, KD 92, KD 99, KD 106–7, KD 117, KD 119–20, KD 132–3, KD 150–1, KD 171–2, KD 182, KD 243, KD 246–7, KD 251, KD 258, S 55, S 75, S 99, S 119, S 130, S 134, S 138, S 200). Occasionally the issue is a judicial decision not dependant on litigation. The comments often show obvious bias in favour of the letter-carrier; but usually he or she was the litigant most likely to suffer injustice if the letter was not sent. The *krites* is normally asked to use the information to make his own decision, leaving space for personal judgement.

Early evidence: The only such letter clearly dated before 1054 is the unusual KD 140, offering one-sided criticism of judicial action already taken. The motivation seems exclusively Psellos’ personal interest.

Evidence dated later: Probably KD 60, more securely KD 132. These thirty or so letters are otherwise extremely difficult to date.

A smaller parallel category consists of pleas to senior ecclesiastics or monastic *hegoumenoi* to rescind exclusions placed on members of their flocks (G 23, KD 113, KD 164, KD 204–5, S 61).

Dated evidence: G 23 and S 61 involve patriarchs of Antioch, and were probably sent in the 1060s, like the dated letters to Antioch. Other letters implying monastic status for Psellos must be dated after 1054.

16.3 Uses of the network: taxation

Early dated letters by Psellos to thematic *kritai* were sent for personal financial reasons. As he prepared for tonsure and retreat to Olympos, he feared that the monasteries he held as *charistikarios* would be badly treated by thematic tax

officials. So he wrote to relevant *kritai* (chiefly Zomas of Opsikion and a successor or successors) to mention likely problems and register the exemptions he held (KD 140, S 29, S 190). References to tax in such letters show a reluctant payer with selfish priorities and a very negative attitude to tax collectors. Similar letters with a rather less selfish tone continue after he left Olympos: see KD 108, KD 117, S 18, S 29, S 103, S 116. But there are more letters with more positive attitudes to tax: after all, if he was advising thematic *kritai*, the collection of tax was a major responsibility of theirs. He often speaks positively of tax, recommends efficient tax officials to *kritai*, and even gives specific advice (KD 74, KD 82–3, KD 165, KD 172, KD 252–3, S 21, S 33, S 43, S 64, S 100, S 172). I believe that most such positive comments should be dated after 1060. There is none clearly dated earlier.

16.4 Uses of the network: *philia* vs. imperial power

Most activities of the network are expressed as mutual help between friends, motivated by *philia*, following Byzantine epistolary conventions. In several programmatic letters, he stresses that he avoids using imperial power, but gets things done by asking favours of his friends (most clearly in KD 61, KD 84, S 65). Hundreds of recipients of favours are also called friends. But in a few cases Psellos speaks outside those conventions. The most striking is the single letter he sends to a *strategos*, referring bluntly to the use of imperial power and authority deriving from imperial favour (S 165). Assumptions of universal friendship with those for whom he writes are nuanced by an admission that in the network of *philia* he often has to write for people he hardly knows (S 146). Equally, without issuing commands, he uses imperial authority less directly by revealing the plans of the emperor and his officers in areas affecting the *krites*, e.g. policies over promotion (KD 39, KD 42, KD 43, KD 53, KD 62, KD 80, KD 107, KD 200, KD 255, S 66, S 76, S 129, S 133, S 146). In the most comprehensive statement of his power, he claims to be the ruler of the rulers, with the same power in all themes as each *krites* has in his own (S 95). One who speaks so frequently of lobbying the emperor for his friends (see excursus 14 and KD 135, KD 168, S 22) is also by implication deploying imperial power when he asks favours of the same friends for others. There are, finally, a few cases where he finds that his use of *philia* is paralleled by written imperial instructions. There he claims, in various formulations, that *philia* will achieve the same effects as an imperial letter, but in a more personal and civilized way (KD 84, KD 107, KD 152).

What is the relevance of this to the dating of the letters sent to the network? Many of the letters listed in this section imply Psellos' complete confidence that he can speak for the imperial authorities. One feels that he may have an explicit and recognized role in organizing the thematic *kritai*. When, during his long career, might this be true?

16.5 Professional advice: making a profit vs. administering justice

With judicial and fiscal powers in the hands of the same *krites*, there was potential for conflict between the dispensation of justice, the demands of the fisc, and the need of the *krites* and his men to make a living. The impression is given that their only source of money in the theme was fee income from judicial work (though the *krites* will have had a salary in the capital). Psellos claims repeatedly that justice and profit are both legitimate and vital aims, to be pursued in parallel through *philia*, with changes of emphasis according to the official's ambition and personal circumstances. The same was true of his *notarioi* and other subordinates, though the attitude of their *krites* had a major influence over the line they took (see KD 7, KD 35, KD 55, KD 70, KD 76, KD 90, KD 96, KD 99–100, KD 160, S 146, S 151, S 189, S 193).

Why is this professional advice being given by Psellos, the consul of the philosophers, and not the *nomophylax*? Similar questions may be asked of most sections in this excursus. I shall sketch an answer in excursus 17 and try a more complete answer in another publication.

16.6 Professional entertainment: the monk Elias

The visits of the idiosyncratic monk Elias are presented in the relevant letters as ways for a busy and overstressed *krites* to relax for a time and enjoy himself (see excursus 4).

17. DATING THE NETWORK AS A WHOLE

Of Psellos' 500+ letters, just over one hundred have already been dated with some certainty in these excursuses, generally to a reign. Some one hundred more are dated less precisely, but in a useful way, given the poor chronological data available and the importance of Psellos' biography. Some fifty of the rest have been saved from the 'undated' label by inclusion in these excursuses by an adverb, usually 'probably'. Some seventy hopeless cases are called 'undated'. Thus around 160 letters have resisted all the above categories. They are not undated, as they belong to the 'network of non-military administrators' proposed in excursus 16, which has datable possibilities. The network includes around 200 letters in all, a minority being dated and included in other statistics. The dating of these letters is the major task remaining. Definition of the network starts from the identity of the recipients, explicit or implied, beginning with thematic *kritai*. Further members include provincial bishops

and major non-military office-holders from the capital, when dealing with the *kritai* or other provincial business.

It seems to me that there is a chronological development in the frequency and motivation of Psellos' letters to this network, from the use of a few personal contacts for selfish purposes to the provision of assistance to non-military administrators which is very large in scale, even in surviving letters, which are probably far less than the total of those he wrote. This looks to me like an attempt at a comprehensive system, not the use of haphazard extant links. The dating of this network and examination of its parameters will hopefully shed interesting light on the decades before Mantzikert and the collapse which followed.

17.1 The beginning of the network

The earliest letter to a thematic *krites* may be S 122, written by Psellos when working in a theme (with which he identifies). It may be addressed by him as a subordinate officer to the *krites* who employed him. Its date depends on the difficult question when Psellos did such work: it may well have been written before 1041. Several other letters, beginning to look like a network, are dated c.1052–6, as Psellos tried to safeguard his monasteries before and after the time when he retired to Olympos himself (see excursus 8). A sprinkling of letters written with purely or largely personal interest for Psellos as *charistikarios* continues throughout the 1050s and 1060s. These letters must be examined with care: they may include some which break dating frameworks made on the basis of less selfish texts. The thickest concentration of dated letters addressed to the network is in the reign of Constantine X. Many of these move away from selfish content towards the idea of the provision of services which, I suggest, is fundamental to the network. I believe that most of the undated letters belong to that reign too, as I shall suggest in 17.4–6.

17.2 The end of the network

Letters under this definition come to an untidy end, spilling over beyond the death of Constantine X into the first of Romanos IV's expeditions into Anatolia (1068–early 1069). A letter or two marginal to the network were written when Psellos himself was in Anatolia in 1069 in Romanos' second expedition. But my efforts to date even one letter to the network after 1069 have failed. Only two or three letters, none belonging to the network, belong to the time of Mantzikert and its aftermath. Letters of the 1070s address old friends like Ioannes Mauropous and Constantine the nephew of Keroularios, continuing dialogues which had lasted decades. A few other items in the corpus of letters fulfil requests made by

Michael VII, and have also been assigned to other volumes in Psellos' published work.⁴⁷ Thus, disregarding the exceptional early letter, I would date the network letters from c.1047, when Psellos won his chair of philosophy, to 1069.

17.3 The absence of the *nomophylax*

Another general consideration (foreshadowed in excursus 16.5), is critical. The core of the network comprises judicial officers from the themes aided by legal subordinates. In 1047 Constantine IX reformed legal education, founding a law-school at the Mangana palace and appointing Ioannes Xiphilinos as *nomophylax* with sweeping powers to run it and organize the law by certifying its professionals, including subordinates.⁴⁸ Nowhere in the corpus of Psellos' letters is there any trace of either law-school or *nomophylax*. Xiphilinos often appears, but as a monk preceding Psellos to Olympos and criticizing him for devotion to pagan classics. The likely failure of the law-school has been discussed in several recent studies of its founding document.⁴⁹ The resources given to Xiphilinos, despite palatial accommodation, were tiny for the ambitious programme set for him. He also proved very sensitive to criticism. An attack on him by an elderly lawyer, Ophrydas, is dismissed by a defence written by Psellos.⁵⁰ This was probably one of several. However in Psellos' much later funerary oration for Xiphilinos, he implies that such attacks, inadequately defended by Constantine IX, were major reasons why Xiphilinos retired to a monastery.⁵¹ The date of his resignation is unclear (c.1049–52), but it marks two stages in the narrative sketched here: a major blow to the law-school, but also the undermining of Psellos' own official career, since he had promised to follow Xiphilinos.

The lack of reference to the *nomophylax* and his school is a problem requiring solution, whenever we date Psellos' network. However, it becomes especially difficult if many of the letters to the network were written between 1047 and Xiphilinos' departure, when the school apparently began but failed.

⁴⁷ KD 188 is also published as Michael Psellus, *Oratoria minora* (ed. Littlewood), no. 32. S 143–4 are diplomatic letters, widely published and discussed outside Psellos' corpus: see Moore 2005, EP 492, pp. 135–6.

⁴⁸ Salač 1954. The powers of Xiphilinos as *nomophylax* and his single-handed role to solve all the problems of the law are stressed throughout. Subordinates are called *taboullarioi* rather than *notarioi* (§§19–21): the roles of these groups were similar, and in the fourteenth century *taboullarioi* may have worked in the city and *notarioi* elsewhere: Psellos' letters suggest that the same might have been true in his day. See ODB III, 1495 s.v. 'notary'.

⁴⁹ Wolska-Conus 1976, and especially Wolska-Conus 1979; Fögen 1996, 182–6; Speck 1991; Troianos, 2012.

⁵⁰ 'Ἀπολογία ὑπὲρ τοῦ νομοφύλακος κατὰ τοῦ Ὀφρυδά', in Michael Psellus, *Orationes forenses et acta*, ed. G.T. Dennis (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1994), 124–42.

⁵¹ Psellos, *Funeral Oration for Xiphilinos*, 12.1–59.

It is hardly conceivable that if Xiphilinos (or a successor) was in office as *nomophylax* when this large corpus of letters was written to *kritai*, his legal role would not at least be mentioned. Its absence shows that the letters were written at another time, probably later, when the personal drama of Xiphilinos and institutional failure of the law-school could be ignored. It is no solution to imagine a scenario in which Xiphilinos taught at the school and organized the profession in the capital while Psellos sent advice to lawyers in the themes and wrote recommendations for *notarioi*. This contravenes the letter and spirit of the school's foundation document, where all legal governance is dominated by and apparently restricted to the *nomophylax*, who is portrayed as saviour and reformer of the legal profession after a period of decline.

17.4 Psellos' career: the best time to date the network

When would be a suitable opportunity for the writing of the bulk of his letters to the network? Before 1047, Psellos was not prominent enough for such a role. The time from 1047 to the resignation of Xiphilinos is unlikely because of the absence of the *nomophylax* (as just argued), while from the departure of Xiphilinos till 1054 Psellos was preparing for his own promised tonsure, and unlikely to take such initiatives. From 1054 to 1057–8 Psellos was on Olympos, then painfully escaping the consequences of going there (see excursuses 11–13): letters to the network at this time were probably mainly of the selfish type. There are signs of returning confidence in 1058–9, with a significant office under Isaakios I, and maybe preparing for the accession of Constantine X at the end of 1059. But the reign of the latter is far the most likely time for the flourishing of the network. The reign of Romanos IV, apart for some overspill at the beginning, is much less propitious: for this and later periods, see excursus 17.3.

17.5 Factors suggesting the reign of Constantine X (or later)

Under excursuses 6, 14, 15, and 16 there are a number of minor indications pointing to a date under Constantine X. These details must be weighed up for each letter. Occasionally they allow secure dating in that reign: more often they just make such a date probable. Many of the points below extend beyond 1067 to the early years (at least) of Romanos IV. The network did not stop at once on Constantine's death. The following situations must be considered:

- Psellos and a correspondent agree in expecting imperial agreement on some issue, but his power proves less than his will (see excursus 6). This suggests the later years of Constantine X, when Psellos probably lost influence at court, without stopping use of the network.

- Psellos lobbies an emperor resembling Constantine X, without conclusive evidence for the identification (excursus 14).
- Psellos conducts a literary experiment of a less than striking kind, maybe automating ways of increasing mutual benefit between friends by a virtuous circle (excursus 15). Some more striking experiments than this bring more definite dating.
- Psellos recommends a subordinate to a non-military administrator (excursus 16.1).
- Psellos sends a thematic *krites* judicial information useful in his court (excursus 16.2).
- Psellos praises an efficient tax collector to an employer, maybe advising him on his work (excursus 16.3).
- Psellos claims direct power as an alternative to *philia*, or makes indirect use of imperial power by disclosing imperial policies or speaking of lobbying him (excursus 16.4).
- Psellos gives the *kritai* professional advice, especially on the balance between justice and profit (excursus 16.5).

17.6 Dating annotations for letters involving the network

All letters considered to be part of the network, whether dated or not, are given a prefix ‘nw’ before the assessed date, immediately after the summary. If the letter may be given a useful date without considering its network status, the prefix is left in lower case:

‘nw c.1065’.

If however the main dating criteria depend on the letter’s connection to the network, the prefix is capitalized. Three formulations are used for the second situation:

‘Nw c.1047–69; more likely 1060–7’: the default dating employed if nothing in a letter indicates an earlier or later date. The built-in prejudice in favour of a later date is due to excursus 17.3.

‘Nw c.1047–69’ is used if there is something in the letter suggestive of a date before 1060, e.g. concentration by Psellos on monasteries he owned (see excursus 17.3). The indication mentioned cancels or even outweighs the built-in prejudice mentioned.

‘Nw probably 1060–7’ is used if there are hints in the letter of a date after 1060 (see the bullet points in excursus 17.5), but these are not enough for a secure dating.

Part II Bibliography

Primary Sources

Key published collections of Psellos' letters: these form the structure of reference to the letters before the publication of Papaioannou's new edition.

C 1-2

Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Michele Psello: Epistola a Giovanni Xifilino* (Naples, ²1990) (C 1).

Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Michele Psello: Epistola a Michele Cerulario* (Naples, ²1990) (C 2).

G 1-38

Gautier, P., 'Quelques lettres de Psellos inédites ou déjà éditées', *REB* 44 (1986), 111-97.

K 1-2

Karpozilos, A., 'Δύο ανέκδοτες επιστολές του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού', *Δωδώνη* 9 (1980), 299-310.

KD 1-274

Kurtz, E. and S. Drexel (eds), *Michaelis Pselli Scripta minora magnam partem adhuc inedita II: Epistulae* (Orbis Romanus 12) (Milan, 1941).

M 1-20

Maltese, E.V., 'Epistole inedite di Michele Psello', *SIFC*, terza serie 5 (1987), 82-98 (letters 1-5); 5 (1987), 214-23 (letters 6-11); 6 (1988), 110-34 (letters 12-20).

P 1

Papaioannou, E.N., 'Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Neuedition', *JÖB* 48 (1998), 110.

S 1-207

Sathas, K.N., *Μεσαιωνική βιβλιοθήκη η συλλογή ανεκδότων μνημείων της Ελληνικής ιστορίας. Μιχαήλ Ψελλού ιστορικοί λόγοι, επιστολαί και άλλα ανέκδοτα*, vol. V (Venice-Paris 1876).

Sn 1

Snipes, K., 'A Letter of Michael Psellos to Constantine the Nephew of Michael Cerularios', *GRBS* 22 (1981), 99-100.

Sp 1

Spadaro, M.D., 'Un'epistola di incerta attribuzione (no. 202 Sathas) ed una semiedita (no. 203 Sathas)', *JÖB* 30 (1981), 157-67.

Secondary Sources

- Agapitos, P.A., 'Teachers, Pupils and Imperial Power in Eleventh-Century Byzantium', in Y.L. Too and N. Livingstone (eds), *Pedagogy and Power: Rhetorics of Classical Learning* (Cambridge, 1998), 170–91.
- Agati, M.L., 'Tre epistole inedite di Michele Psello', *Sicilorum Gymnasium* 33 (1980), 909–16.
- Agati, M.L., 'Due epistole di Psello ad un monaco del monte Olimpo', in *Studi albanologici, balcanici, bizantini e orientali in onore di Giuseppe Valentini S.J.* (Studi albanesi, Studi e testi 6) (Florence, 1986), 177–90.
- Glykatzis-Ahrweiler, H., 'Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX–XIème siècles', *BCH* 84 (1960), 1–111.
- Ahrweiler, H., *Byzance et la mer* (Paris, 1966).
- Ahrweiler, H., 'Charisticariat et autres formes d'attribution de fondations pieuses aux Xe–XIe siècles', *ZRVI* 10 (1967), 1–27.
- Albini, U., 'Psello epist. 124 Sathas', *SIFC* 5 (1987), 212–13.
- Anastasi, R., 'Filosofia e techne a Bisanzio nell'XI secolo', *Sicilorum Gymnasium* 27 (1974), 352–86.
- Anastasi, R., 'A proposito di un recente libro su Psellos', *Sicilorum Gymnasium* 27 (1974a), 387–420.
- Anastasi, R., *Studi di filologia bizantina I* (Quaderni di Sicilorum Gymnasium 2) (Catania, 1976).
- Anastasi, R., 'Michele Psello al metropolita di Euchaita (Epist. 34 pp. 53–56 K.-D.)', in *Studi di filologia bizantina IV* (Quaderni di Sicilorum Gymnasium 16) (Catania, 1988), 105–20.
- Anastasi, R., 'Sulla fine dell'epistola di Psello a Giovanni Xiphilino', *Byz* 58 (1988a), 455–6.
- Anastasi, R., 'Psello e le Kinolexie', in *Studi di filologia bizantina IV* (Quaderni di Sicilorum Gymnasium 16) (Catania, 1988b), 55–79.
- Angelidi, C., 'Μιχαήλ Ψελλός: η ματιά του φιλότεχνου', *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 12 (1998), 75–85.
- Angelidi, C., 'Observing, Describing and Interpreting: Michael Psellos on Works of Ancient Art', *Νέα Πώμη* 2 (2005), 227–42.
- Angold, M., 'Imperial Renewal and Orthodox Reaction: Byzantium in the Eleventh Century', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *New Constantines* (Aldershot, 1994), 231–46.
- Angold, M., *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni: 1081–1261* (Cambridge, 1995).
- Angold, M., 'The Autobiographical Impulse in Byzantium', *DOP* 52 (1998), 225–57.
- Barber, C., 'Living Painting, or The limits of Pointing? Glancing at Icons with Michael Psellos', in Barber and Jenkins 2006, 117–30.
- Barber, C. and D. Jenkins (eds.), *Reading Michael Psellos* (Medieval Mediterranean 61) (Leiden-Boston, 2006).
- Beck, H.-G., *Byzantinisches Lesebuch* (Munich, 1982).
- Bernard, F., 'Exchanging Logoi for Aloga: Cultural Capital and Material Capital in a Letter of Michael Psellos', *BMGS* 35 (2011), 134–48.
- Bernard, F., "'Greet me with words": Gifts and Intellectual Friendships in Eleventh-Century Byzantium', in Grünbart 2011, 1–13 (2011a).

- Bernard, F., 'Gifts of Words: The Discourse of Gift-Giving in Eleventh-Century Byzantine Poetry', in F. Bernard and K. Demoen (eds), *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Farnham, 2012), 37–51.
- Bernard, F., *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081* (Oxford, 2014).
- Bernard, F., 'Humor in Byzantine Letters of the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: Some Preliminary Remarks', *DOP* 69 (2015), 179–195.
- Bernard, F., 'Educational Networks in the Letters of Michael Psellos', Chapter 2, this volume (2017).
- Bezobrazov, P.V., *Vizantiiskii pisatel' i gosudartsvennyi deiatel' Mikhail Psell* (Moscow, 1890); 2nd ed., by Ia. N. Liubarskii, *Dve knigi o Mikhaile Pselle* (St Petersburg, 2001) [П. В. Безобразов. Византийский писатель и государственный деятель Михаил Пселл. М., 1890. 2ое изд. в кн.: П. В. Безобразов, Я. Н. Любарский. Две книги о Михаиле Пселле. СПб., 2001].
- Bibicou, H., 'Une page d'histoire diplomatique de Byzance au XIe siècle: Michel VII Ducas, Robert Guiscard et la pension des dignitaires', *Byz* 29–30 (1959–60), 43–75.
- Bidez, J., 'Proclus. Περὶ τῆς ἱερατικῆς τέχνης', *Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 4 (1936) [=Mélanges Cumont], 85–100.
- Boissonade, J.-F., *Michael Psellus, De operatione daemonum cum notis Gaulmini: Accedunt inedita opuscula Pselli* (Nuremberg, 1838).
- Braounou-Pietsch, E., 'Der Brief des Michael Psellos an den geblendeten Romanos Diogenes: ein Fall von Zynismus und Sarkasmus?', *Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 15 (2010), 25–41.
- Browning, R., 'Enlightenment and Repression in Byzantium in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Past and Present* 69 (1975), 3–23.
- Bydén, B. and K. Ierodiakonou (eds), *The Many Faces of Byzantine Philosophy* (Athens, 2012).
- Canart, P., 'Nouveaux inédits de Michel Psellos', *REB* 25 (1967), 43–60.
- Chalandon, F., *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile* (Paris, 1907; rpt. New York, 1960).
- Charanis, P., 'Byzantium, the West, and the Origin of the First Crusade', *Byz* 19 (1949), 17–36.
- Chernoglazov, D., 'Was bedeuten drei Fische? Betrachtungen zu Geschenken in byzantinischen Briefe', in Grünbart 2011, 55–69.
- Cheyne, J.-C., 'Du stratège de thème au duc: chronologie de l'évolution au cours du 11e siècle', *TM* 9 (1985), 181–94.
- Cheyne, J.-C., 'L'Asie Mineure d'après la correspondance de Psellos', *BF* 25 (1999), 233–41.
- Cheyne, J.-C., *La société byzantine: l'apport des sceaux*, 2 vols (Paris, 2008).
- Chondridou, S., *Ο Κωνσταντίνος Θ' και η εποχή του* (Thessaloniki, 2002).
- Chondridou, S., 'Συμβολή στη μελέτη της σχεδογραφίας τον ενδέκατον αιώνα, Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα 15 (2002a), 149–59.
- Creuzer, F., 'Michaëlis Pselli epistulae hucusque ineditae', in F.T. Friedemann and J.D.G. Seebode (eds.), *Miscellanea maximam partem critica* II part 4 (Hildesheim, 1823), 601–23.
- Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Psellus, Epistola a Giovanni Xifilino: testo critico, introduzione, traduzione e note* (Naples, 1973).
- Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Psellus, Epistola a Michele Cerulario: testo critico, introduzione, traduzione e note* (Naples, 1975).

- Criscuolo, U., 'Sui rapporti tra Michele Psello e Giovanni Xifilino (ep. 191 Kurtz-Drexl)', *Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana* 24.5 (1975a), 121–8.
- Criscuolo, U., 'Note filologiche 2. Sull'epistola 36 Sathas = 273 Kurtz—Drexl di Michele Psello', *BollGrott*, nuova serie, 30 (1976), 59–63.
- Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Michele Psello: Epistola a Michele Cerulario*, 2nd ed. riv. e ampliata (Naples, 1990).
- Criscuolo, U. (ed.), *Michele Psello: Epistola a Giovanni Xifilino*, 2nd ed. riv. e ampliata (Naples, 1990a).
- Cutler, A. and R. Browning, 'In the Margins of Byzantium? Some Icons in Michael Psellos', *BMGS* 16 (1992), 21–32.
- Dagron, G., 'Psellos épigraphiste', in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983) [=Okeanos, Festschrift I. Ševčenko], 117–24.
- Dakouros, D.G., 'Michael Psellos' Kritik an den alten Griechen und dem griechischen Kult', *Θεολογία* 48 (1977), 41–75.
- d'Alès, A., 'A Byzance, Psellos et Cérulaire', *Études (Revue de la Compagnie de Jésus)* 167 (1921), 178–204.
- Darrouzès, J., 'Notes d'épistolographie et d'histoire des textes', *REB* 12 (1954), 176–86.
- De Vries-van der Velden, E., 'La lune de Psellos', *BSI* 57 (1996), 239–56.
- De Vries-van der Velden, E., 'Psellos et son gendre', *BF* 23 (1996a), 109–49.
- De Vries-van der Velden, E., 'Psellos, Romain IV Diogènes et Mantzikert', *BSI* 58 (1997), 274–310.
- De Vries-van der Velden, E., 'Les amitiés dangereuses: Psellos et Léon Paraspondylos', *BSI* 60 (1999), 313–50.
- De Vries-van der Velden, E., 'The Letters of Michael Psellos, Historical Knowledge and the Writing of History', in W. Hörandner and M. Grünbart (eds), *L'épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique (Dossiers Byzantins 3)* (Paris, 2003), 120–35.
- Dennis, G., 'Elias the Monk, Friend of Psellos', in J.W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Byzantine Authors. Literary Activities and Preoccupations: Texts and Translations Dedicated to the Memory of Nikos Oikonomides* (Leiden; Boston, 2003), 43–62.
- Di Rella, F., 'Michele Psello e la musica bizantina', *Annali della Facoltà di lettere e filosofia (Bari)* 39 (1996), 89–105.
- Dodds, E.R., 'Theurgy and its Relationship to Neoplatonism', *Journal of Roman Studies* 37 (1947), 55–69.
- Dölger, F., *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453* (Munich-Berlin, 1925), 2nd ed. by P. Wirth (Munich, 1995).
- Dostálová, R., 'Tabula Iliaca (Odysseaca) Ducaena. Au sujet d'une épître de Psellos', *BSI* 47 (1986), 28–33.
- Drexl, F., 'Γορδιασόν', *BZ* 40 (1940), 445.
- Drexl, F., 'Μή θάψω σε', *BZ* 40 (1940a), 405.
- Drexl, F., 'Nachträge zur Ausgabe der Psellosbriefe von Kurtz—Drexl', *BZ* 41 (1941), 309–10.
- Duffy, J., 'Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic: Michael Psellos and Michael Italikos', in H. Maguire (ed.), *Byzantine magic* (Washington, 1995), 83–97.
- Duffy, J., 'Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium and the Lonely Mission of Michael Psellos', in Ierodiakonou 2002, 139–56.

- Duyé, N., 'Un haut fonctionnaire byzantin du XIe siècle: Basile Malésès', *REB* 30 (1972), 167–78.
- Eberhard, A., 'Bericht über die späteren griechischen Prosaiker', *Bursians Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 5.3 (1877), 550–1.
- Fisher, E.A., 'Image and Ekphrasis in Michael Psellos' Sermon on the Crucifixion', *BSI* 55 (1994), 44–55.
- Fögen, M.-Th., 'Modell und Mythos. Die Rechtsfakultäten von Konstantinopel, Neapel und Bologna im Mittelalter', *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 15 (1996), 182–6.
- Follieri, E., 'Giovanni Mauropode, Metropolita d'Euchaita: Otto canoni paracletici a N. S. Gesù Cristo', *Archivio Italiano per la Storia della Pietà* 5 (1968), 1–200 [also separately published, with the same title, in Rome, 1967].
- Fuchs, F., *Die höheren Schulen von Konstantinopel im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1926).
- Garzya, A., 'Visages de l'hellénisme dans le monde byzantin', *Byz* 55 (1985), 463–82.
- Gautier, P., 'Quelques lettres de Psellos inédites ou déjà éditées', *REB* 44 (1986), 111–97.
- Gautier, P., 'La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzetzes', *REB* 28 (1970), 207–20.
- Gautier, P., 'Eloge funèbre de Nicolas de la Belle Source par Michel Psellos moine à l'Olympe', *Βυζαντινά* 6 (1974), 11–69.
- Gautier, P., Review of Weiss 1973, *REB* 33 (1975), 325–30.
- Gautier, P., 'Précisions historiques sur le monastère de *Ta Narsou*', *REB* 34 (1976), 101–10.
- Gautier, P., 'Un chrysoboullé de confirmation rédigé par Michel Psellos', *REB* 34 (1976a), 79–99.
- Gautier, P., 'Monodies inédites de Michel Psellos', *REB* 36 (1978), 83–151.
- Gautier, P., 'Quelques lettres de Psellos inédites ou déjà éditées', *REB* 44 (1986), 111–97.
- Georgiou, S.G., 'The Office of Kourator of Cyprus during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Byzantina* 32 (2012), 183–208.
- Gkoutzioukostas [Γκουτζιουκώστας], A.E., 'Η εξέλιξη του θεσμού των ασηκρήτις και του πρωτοασηκρήτις στο πλαίσιο της αυτοκρατορικής γραμματείας', *Βυζαντινά* 23 (2002–3), 47–93.
- Gkoutzioukostas [Γκουτζιουκώστας], A.E., *Η απονομή δικαιοσύνης στο Βυζάντιο (9^{ος}–12^{ος} αιώνες)* (Thessaloniki, 2004).
- Gkoutzioukostas [Γκουτζιουκώστας], A.E., 'Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βυζαντινού φορολογικού μηχανισμού: Η περίπτωση του χρυσοτελή', *Βυζαντινά* 26 (2007), 65–82.
- Gkoutzioukostas [Γκουτζιουκώστας], A.E., *Το αξίωμα του μυστικού. Θεσμικά και προσωπογραφικά προβλήματα* (Thessaloniki, 2011).
- Gkoutzioukostas [Γκουτζιουκώστας], A.E., 'The Judges of the Macedonia Theme (9th–12th c.)', *JÖB* 63 (2013), 113–26.
- Glykatzis-Ahrweiler, H., 'Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX–XI^{ème} siècles', *BCH* 84 (1960), 67–78.
- Gouillard, J., 'La religion des philosophes', *TM* 6 (1976), 305–24.
- Grünbart, M., 'Athanasios Chatzikes und Michael Psellos', *Byz* 70 (2000), 307–8.
- Grünbart, M., *Formen der Anrede im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 2005).
- Grünbart, M., 'Nachrichten aus dem Hinterland Konstantinopels: die Briefsammlung des Mönchs Hierotheos (12. Jahrhundert)', *BZ* 100 (2007), 57–70.

- Grünbart, M., *Geschenke erhalten die Freundschaft: Gabentausch und Netzwerkpflege in europäischen Mittelalter* (Berlin, 2011), including 'Einleitung', xiii–xxv.
- Guglielmino, A.M., 'Un maestro di grammatica a Bisanzio nell'XI secolo e l'epitafio per Niceta di Michele Psello', *Siculorum Gymnasium*, nuova serie, 27 (1974), 421–63.
- Guilland, R., 'Le décanos et le référendaire', *REB* 5 (1947), 99–100.
- Guilland, R., 'Études de titulature byzantine: les titres auliques réservés aux eunuques', *REB* 13 (1955), 50–84.
- Guilland, R., 'A propos d'un texte de Michel Psellos', *BSI* 21 (1960), 1–37.
- Guilland, R., 'Études sur l'histoire administrative de l'empire byzantin: le sébastophore', *REB* 21 (1963), 199–207.
- Guilland, R., 'Études sur l'Histoire administrative de l'empire byzantine: Le mystique, *μυστικός*', *REB* 26 (1968), 279–96.
- Guilland, R., 'Les Logothètes: Études sur l'histoire administrative de l'Empire byzantin', *REB* 29 (1971), 5–115.
- Haldon, J., 'Military Service, Military Lands, and the Status of Soldiers: Current Problems and Interpretations', *DOP* 47 (1993), 1–67.
- Harvey, A., *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire 900–1200* (Cambridge, 1989).
- Hase, C.B. and E. Miller (eds), *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens grecs I* (Paris, 1875).
- Herrin, J., 'Realities of Byzantine Provincial Government: Hellas and Peloponnesos, 1180–1205', *DOP* 29 (1975), 253–84.
- Hunger, H., 'On the Imitation (*MIMHΣΙΣ*) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature', *DOP* 23–4 (1969–70), 15–38.
- Ieraci Bio, A.M., 'Due citazioni di Ippocrate e Galeno nell'epistola 101 K.-D. di Michele Psello', *Filologia antica e moderna* 11 (1996), 101–6.
- Ierodiakonou, K. (ed.), *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources* (Oxford, 2002).
- Ierodiakonou, K., 'Psellos' periphrasis on Aristotle's *De interpretatione*', in Ierodiakonou 2002, 157–81 (2002a).
- Jeffreys, E. et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, 2008).
- Jeffreys, M., 'Psellos and "His Emperors": Fact, Fiction and Genre', in Macrides 2010, 73–91.
- Jeffreys, M., 'Psellos in 1078', *BZ* 107 (2014), 77–96.
- Jeffreys, M., 'Constantine, Nephew of the Patriarch Keroularios and His Good Friend Michael Psellos', Chapter 4, this volume (2017).
- Jeffreys, M., 'Psellos and the Monastery', Chapter 3, this volume (2017a).
- Jeffreys, M., 'Michael Psellos and the Eleventh Century: A Double Helix of Reception', in M. Lauxtermann and M. Whittow (eds), *Being in Between: Byzantium in the Eleventh Century* (forthcoming).
- Jenkins, D., 'Psellos' Conceptual Precision', in Barber and Jenkins 2006, 131–51.
- Joannou, P., 'Psellos et le monastère Ta Narsou', *BZ* 44 (1951), 283–90.
- Kaldellis, A., *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden; Boston, 1999).
- Kaldellis, A., 'The Date of Psellos' Theological Lectures and Higher Religious Education in Constantinople', *BSI* 63 (2005) 143–51.
- Kaldellis, A., *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007).

- Kaldellis, A., *The Christian Parthenon: Classicism and Pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens* (Cambridge, 2009).
- Kaldellis, A., 'The Date of Psellos' Death, Once Again: Psellos Was Not the Michael of Nikomedea Mentioned by Attaleiates', *BZ* 104 (2011), 651–64.
- Kaldellis, A., 'Byzantine Philosophy Inside and Out: Orthodoxy and Dissidence in Counterpoint', in Bydén and Ierodiakonou 2012, 125–51.
- Kambylis, A., 'Epiphylides: Neunzig kritische Bemerkungen zu byzantinischen Prosa-texten', in *Kyklos. Griechisches und byzantinisches: Rudolf Keydell zum neunzigsten Geburtstag* (Berlin; New York, 1978), 129–70.
- Karpozilos, A., *Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου και του έργου του Ίωάννη Μαυρόποδος* (Ioannina, 1982).
- Karpozilos, A., 'Realia in Byzantine epistolography X–XII c.', *BZ* 77 (1984), 20–37.
- Karpozilos, A., 'Varia philologica', *JÖB* 38 (1988), 257–62.
- Karpozilos, A., *The Letters of Ioannes Mauropus Metropolitan of Euchaita* (Thessaloniki, 1990).
- Karpozilos, A., 'When Did Michael Psellos Die? The Evidence of the Dioptra', *BZ* 96 (2003), 671–7.
- Karpozilou, M., 'The Epistolarion of Theophilos Korydaleus', *Ελληνικά* 49 (1999), 289–303.
- Kassel, R., 'Aus der Arbeit an den Poetae Comici Graeci', *ZPE* 25 (1977), 54–94.
- Kazhdan, A., 'Some Problems in the Biography of John Mauropus', *JÖB* 43 (1993), 87–111.
- Kazhdan, A., 'Some Observations on the Byzantine Concept of Law: Three Authors of the Ninth through the Twelfth Centuries', in Laiou and Simon 1994, 199–216.
- Kazhdan, A. and J. Ljubarskij, 'Basile Malésès encore une fois', *BSI* 34 (1973), 219–20.
- Kazhdan, A. and A. Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London, 1985).
- Koder, J., *Aigaion pelagos: die nördliche Ägäis* (TIB 10) (Vienna, 1998).
- Kolia-Dermizaki, A., 'Michael VII Doukas, Robert Guiscard and the Byzantine-Norman Marriage Negotiations', *BSI* 58 (1997), 251–68.
- Kolias, G., 'Κίνητρα και προσχήματα της εισβολής του Ροβέρτου Γουισκάρδου εις το Βυζάντιον (1081)', *Πλάτων* 10 (1958), 115–25.
- Kolias, G., 'Le motif et les raisons de l'invasion de Robert Guiscard en territoire byzantin', *Byz* 36 (1966), 424–30.
- Korydaleus, Th., *Περὶ ἐπιστολικῶν τύπων* (London, 1625).
- Külzer, A., *Ostthrakien* (TIB 12) (Vienna, 2008).
- Kyriazopoulos [Κυριαζόπουλος], X., *Η Θράκη κατά τους 10ο–12ο αιώνες: συμβολή στη μελέτη της πολιτικής, διοικητικής και εκκλησιαστικής της εξέλιξης*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1997.
- Laiou, A.E. and D. Simon (eds), *Law and Society in Byzantium, Ninth–Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, 1994).
- Lambros, S., *Μιχαήλ Ακομινάτου του Χωνιάτου τα σωζόμενα* (Athens, 1879–80).
- Lambros, S. and K.I. Dyobouniotes, 'Το υπ' αριθμόν γγ' κατάλοιπον', *Νέος Ελληνομνημίων* 16 (1922), 351, 390–2.
- Lascaratos, J. and S. Marketos, 'The Penalty of Blinding During Byzantine Times: Medical Remarks', *Documenta ophthalmologica* 81 (1992), 133–44.

- Lauxtermann, M., 'The Intertwined Lives of Michael Psellos and John Mauroπους', Chapter 5, this volume (2017).
- Lauxtermann, M., 'Introduction', this volume (2017a).
- Lemerle, P., '“Roga” et rente d'état aux Xe-XIe siècles', *REB* 25 (1967), 77–100.
- Lemerle, P., *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977).
- Leroy-Molinghen, A., 'La descendance adoptive de Psellos', *Byz* 39 (1969), 284–317.
- Limousin, E., 'Les lettrés en société: «φίλος βίος» ou «πολιτικός βίος»?', *Byz* 69 (1999), 344–65.
- Limousin, E., 'L'entrée dans la carrière à Byzance au XIe siècle: Michel Psellos et Jean Skylitzès', in J.-C. Cassard, Y. Coativy, A. Gallicé, and D. Le Page (eds), *Le prince, l'argent, les hommes au Moyen Âge: Mélanges offerts à Jean Kerhevé* (Rennes, 2008), 67–76.
- Limousin, E., 'La rhétorique au secours du patrimoine: Psellos, les impératrices et les monastères', in L. Theis, M. Mullett, and M. Grünbart, with G. Fingarova and M. Savage (eds), *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond* (=Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte LX/LXI [2011/2012]) (Vienna, 2014), 163–75.
- Litavrin, G.G., 'Tri pis'ma Mikhaila Psella Katakalonu Kekavmenu', *RESEE* 7 (1969), 455–68.
- Littlewood, A.R., 'An “Icon of the Soul”: The Byzantine Letter', *Visible Language* 10 (1976), 197–226.
- Ljubarskij, J.N., 'K biografy Ioanna Mavropoda', *Byzantinobulgarica* 4 (1973), 41–51.
- Ljubarskij, J.N., *Michail Psell: Ličnost' i tvorčestvo* (Moscow, 1978).
- Ljubarskij, J.N., 'The Fall of an Intellectual: The Intellectual and Moral Atmosphere in Eleventh-Century Byzantium', in S. Vryonis Jr. (ed.), *Byzantine Studies: Essays on the Slavic world and the Eleventh Century* (New Rochelle, NY, 1992), 175–82.
- Ljubarskij, J.N., 'How Should a Byzantine Text Be Read?' in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2003), 117–25.
- Ljubarskij, J.N., 'The Byzantine Irony: The Case of Michael Psellos', in A. Avramea, A. Laiou, and E. Chrysos (eds), *Βυζάντιο, κράτος και κοινωνία. Μνήμη Νίκου Οικονομίδη* (Athens, 2003a), 349–60.
- Ljubarskij, J.N., *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 2004).
- Macrides, R., 'The Byzantine Godfather', *BMGS* 11 (1987), 139–62.
- Macrides, R., 'Kinship by Arrangement: The Case of Adoption', *DOP* 44 (1990), 109–18.
- Macrides, R. (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Farnham, 2010).
- Magdalino, P., 'Justice and Finance in the Byzantine State, Ninth to Twelfth Centuries', in Laiou and Simon 1994, 93–115.
- Magdalino, P., 'The Bath of Leo the Wise and the “Macedonian Renaissance” Revisited: Topography, Iconography, Ceremonial, Ideology', *DOP* 42 (1988), 97–118.
- Maltese, E.V., 'Epistole inedite di Michele Psello', *SIFC*, terza serie 5 (1987), 82–98, 214–23; 6 (1988), 110–34.
- Maltese, E.V., 'Varia byzantina I: Michaelis Pselli epistularum loci nonnulli', in *Heptachordos Lyra Humberto Albini oblata* (Genoa, 1988), 26–30.
- Maltese, E.V., 'Varia byzantina II: Un ulteriore testimone inesplorato dell'epistola di Michele Psello a Giovanni Xiphilino (175 S.)', in *Heptachordos Lyra Humberto Albini oblata* (Genoa, 1988a), 30–1.

- Maltese, E.V., 'Il ms. Barocci 131 per l'epistolario di Mechele Psello', *Aevum* 63 (1989), 186–92.
- Mango, C., 'Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder', *DOP* 17 (1963), 55–75.
- Mango, C. and I. Ševčenko, 'Some churches and monasteries on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmora', *DOP* 27 (1973), 235–77.
- Mayer, A., 'Psellos' Rede über den rhetorischen Chartakter des Gregorios von Nazianz', *BZ* 20 (1911), 27–100.
- McQueen, W.B., 'Relations between the Normans and Byzantium, 1071–1112', *Byz* 56 (1986), 427–76.
- Metzler, K., 'Pagane Bildung im christlichen Byzanz: Basileios von Kaisareia, Michael Psellos und Theodoros Metochites', in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (Berlin and New York, 2007), 287–303.
- Meyendorff, J., *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York, 1983).
- Mogenet, J., *Codices Barberiniani graeci II: Codices 164–281* (Vatican, 1989).
- Moore, P., *Iter Psellianum* (Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Subsidia Mediaevalia 26) (Toronto, 2005).
- Mottana, A., 'Istoria della mineralogia antica I: La mineralogia a Bisanzio nel XI secolo D.C. I poteri insiti nelle pietre secondo Michele Psello', *Rendiconti Lincei: Scienze Fisiche e Naturali*, serie IX, 16 (2005), 227–95.
- Mullett, M., 'Byzantium: A Friendly Society?', *Past and Present* 118 (1988), 3–24.
- Niarchos, C., 'The Philosophical Background of the Eleventh-Century Revival of Learning in Byzantium', in M. Mullett and R. Scott (eds), *The Classical Tradition in Byzantium* (Birmingham, 1981), 127–35.
- Oikonomides, N., 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067): Un épisode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance', *REB* 21 (1963), 101–28.
- Oikonomides, N., 'L'Évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XI^e siècle (1025–1118)', *TM* 6 (1976), 126–52.
- Oikonomides, N., 'The Holy Icon as an Asset', *DOP* 45 (1991), 35–44.
- Oikonomides, N., *Fiscalité et exemption fiscale à Byzance (IX–XI s.)* (Athens, 1996).
- O'Meara, D.J., 'Political Philosophy in Michael Psellos: The *Chronographia* Read in Relation to His Philosophical Work', in Bydén and Ierodiakonou 2012, 153–70.
- Ostrogorsky, G.A., 'K istorii immuniteta v vizantii', *VV* 13 (1958), 55–106.
- Ostrogorsky, G.A. and H. Grégoire, 'Pour l'histoire de l'immunité à Byzance' (translation of Ostrogorsky 1958), *Byz* 28 (1958), 165–254.
- Papadopoulos-Kerameus, A., 'Μιχαήλ Ψελλοῦ ἐπιστολαὶ ἀνέκδοτοι', *Νέα Σιών* 7 (1908), 497–516.
- Papaoiannou, S., 'Das Briefcorpus des Michael Psellos: Vorarbeiten zu einer kritischen Neuedition', *JÖB* 48 (1998), 67–117.
- Papaoiannou, S., 'Michael Psellos' Rhetorical Gender', *BMGS* 24 (2000), 133–46.
- Papaoiannou, S., 'Letters Regarding Psellos' Family', in A. Kaldellis (ed.), *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters: The Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos* (Notre Dame, 2006), 167–78.
- Papaoiannou, S., 'Animate Statues: Aesthetics and Movement', in Barber and Jenkins 2006a, 95–116.

- Papaioannou, S., 'The Aesthetics of History: From Theophanes to Eustathios', in Macrides 2010, 3–21.
- Papaioannou, S., 'Byzantine Mirrors: Self-Reflection in Byzantine Writing', *DOP* 64 (2010a), 81–101.
- Papaioannou, S., 'Michael Psellos on Friendship and Love: Erotic Discourse in Eleventh-Century Constantinople', *Early Medieval Europe* 19 (2011), 43–61.
- Papaioannou, S., 'Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and the Philosopher in Byzantium', in Bydén and Ierodiakonou 2012, 153–70.
- Papaioannou, S., 'Fragile Literature: Byzantine letter-collections and the case of Michael Psellos' in P. Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine; le text en tant que message immédiat* (Dossiers Byzantins 11) (Paris, 2012a), 289–328.
- Papaioannou, S., *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2013).
- Migne, J.-P. (ed.), *Pselli Epistolae*. Patrologia Græca, vol. 122 (Paris, 1864), cols. 1162–86.
- Migne, J.-P. (ed.), *Appendix: Eustathii Epistolae*. Patrologia Græca, vol. 136 (Paris, 1866), cols. 1318–33.
- Mogenet, J., *Codices Barberiniani graeci II: Codices 164–281* (Vatican, 1989).
- Pitarakis, B., 'Material Culture of Childhood in Byzantium', in A. Papaconstantinou and A.-M. Talbot (eds), *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium* (Washington, DC, 2009), 167–251.
- Plepelits, K. (ed.), *Eustathios Makrembolites*, Hysmine und Hysminias (Stuttgart, 1989).
- Polemis, D.I., *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London, 1968).
- Rambaud, A., 'Michel Psellos, philosophe et homme d'État byzantine au XI^e siècle', *Revue Historique* 3 (1877), 241–82.
- Reinsch, D.R., 'Venomous Praise: Some Remarks Concerning Michael Psellos' Letters to Leon Paraspondylos', Chapter 6, this volume (2017).
- Riedinger, J.C., 'Quatre étapes de la vie de Michel Psellos', *REB* 68 (2010), 5–60.
- Ruelle, C., 'Traduction de quelques textes grecs inédits recueillis à Madrid et à l'Escurial', *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques en France* 8 (1874), 123–49.
- Salač, A. (ed.), *Novella constitutio saec. XI medii* (Prague, 1954).
- Saradi, H., 'The Byzantine Tribunals: Problems in the Application of Justice and State Policy (9th–12th c.)', *REB* 53 (1995), 165–204.
- Sarres [Σαρρής], B.A., *Η βυζαντινή παραμυθητική επιστολή. Από τον Θεόδωρο Στουδίτη έως τον Ευστάθιο Θεσσαλονίκης (9^{ος}–12^{ος} αι.)* (Thessaloniki, 2005).
- Sathas, K.N., *Μιχαήλ Ψελλοῦ Ἑκατοντητηρῆς Βυζαντινῆς ἱστορίας (976–1077)*, in *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. IV (Paris, 1874).
- Sathas, K.N., 'Deux lettres inédites de l'Empereur Michel Ducas à Robert Guiscard rédigées par Michel Psellus', *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques en France* 8 (1874a), 193–221.
- Savvidis, A.G.C., 'The Byzantine Family of Kekaumenos (Late 10th–Early 12th Century)', *Δίπτυχα* 4 (1986–7), 12–27.
- Schminck, A., 'Zum Todesjahr des Michael Psellos', *BZ* 94 (2001), 190–6.
- Seibt, W., *Die Skleroi: Eine prosopographisch-sigillographische Studie* (BV 9) (Vienna, 1976).

- Seibt, W., 'Der byzantinische Rangtitel Sebastos in vorkommenischer Zeit', *TM* 16 (2010), 759–64.
- Shepard, J., 'A Suspected Source of Scylitzes' *Synopsis Historion: The Great Catacalon Cecaumenus*', *BMGS* 16 (1992), 171–81.
- Sideras, A., *Χρονογραφία του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού* (Athens, 1993).
- Sideras, A., *Die byzantinischen Grabreden* (WBS 19) (Vienna, 1994).
- Siniossoglou, N., *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon* (Cambridge, 2011).
- Snipes, K., 'A Letter of Michael Psellos to Constantine the Nephew of Michael Cerularios', *GRBS* 22 (1981), 89–107.
- Spadaro, M.D., 'Sui fogli 143v–144v del cod. Barberinianus gr. 240', *Siculorum Gymnasium*, nuova serie, 25 (1972), 245–53.
- Spadaro, M.D., 'Sull'epistola di Psello 44 Sathas', *Siculorum Gymnasium*, nuova serie, 29 (1976), 427–35.
- Spadaro, M.D., 'Un'epistola di incerta attribuzione (no. 202 Sathas) ed una semiedita (no. 203 Sathas)', *JÖB* 30 (1981), 157–67.
- Speck, P., 'Konstantinopel: ein Modell für Bologna? Zur Gründung einer Rechtsschule durch Irnerius', *Varia III [Ποικίλα Βυζαντινά 11]* (Bonn 1991), 330–48.
- Stephenson, P., 'The Balkan Frontier in the Year 1000', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000* (Leiden; Boston, 2003), 109–33.
- Stephenson, P., *The Byzantine World* (London; New York, 2010).
- Tafel, T.L.F., *Eustathii metropolitae Thessalonicensis Opuscula* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1832).
- Tafel, T.L.F., *De Thessalonica eiusque agro dissertatio geographica* (Berlin, 1839).
- Tapkova-Zaimova, V., 'Saobscheniya za kharistky v nashite zemi', *Izvestiya na Instituta za bulgarska istoriya* 5 (1954), 385–92.
- Tatakis, B., *Η βυζαντινή φιλοσοφία* (Athens, 1977).
- Tatakis, B., *Byzantine Philosophy* (Indianapolis; Cambridge, 2003).
- Tinnefeld, F., 'Freundschaft in den Briefen des Michael Psellos: Theorie und Wirklichkeit', *JÖB* 22 (1973), 151–68.
- Tinnefeld, F., 'Michael I Kerullarios, Patriarch von Konstantinopel (1043–1058). Kritische Überlegungen zu einer Biographie', *JÖB* 39 (1989), 95–127.
- Todt, K.-P., *Region und griechisch-orthodoxes Patriarchat von Antiocheia in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit und im Zeitalter der Kreuzzüge (964–1204)*, Teil II: 6. Kapitel–11 Kapitel (Wiesbaden, 2005), 499–956.
- Tovar, A., 'Niketas of Heraclea and Byzantine Grammatical Doctrine', in *Classical Studies Presented to Ben Edwin Perry* (=Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 38) (Urbana, 1969), 223–35.
- Troianos, S., 'Η Νεαρά Κωνσταντίνου του Μονομάχου ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναδείξει καὶ προβολῇ τοῦ διδασκάλου τῶν νόμων', *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 22 (2012), 243–63.
- Varzos, K., *Η γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν, τόμος Α΄* (Thessaloniki, 1984).
- Vasil'evskij, V., 'Dva pis'ma vizantyskago imperatora Mikhila VII Duki k Vsevolodu Yaroslavichu', *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniya* 182 (1875), 270–315.
- Vinson, M.P., *The Correspondence of Leo, Metropolitan of Synada and Syncellus* (Washington, DC, 1985).

- Volk, R., *Der medizinische Inhalt der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (MBM 32) (Munich, 1990).
- Volk, R., 'Eine seltsame Metaphrase von Psellos-Briefen', *JÖB* 52 (2002), 185–9.
- Von Heinemann, L., *Geschichte der Normannen in Unteritalien und Sicilien bis zum Aussterben des Normannischen Königshauses* (Leipzig, 1894).
- Vryonis Jr., S., 'Michael Psellos, Michael Attaleiates: The Blinding of Romanos IV at Kolyaion (29 June 1072) and His Death on Proti (4 August 1072)', in C. Dendrinos et al. (eds), *Porphyrogenita: Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides* (Aldershot, 2003), 3–14.
- Walker, J., 'These Things I Have Not Betrayed: Michael Psellos' Encomium of His Mother as a Defense of Rhetoric', *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 22 (2004), 49–101.
- Wassiliou, A.-K., 'Die Familie Hexamilites: Ein Beitrag zur byzantinischen Prosopographie', *Ελληνικά* 52 (2002), 234–61.
- Wassiliou, A.-K. and W. Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich, 2. Teil* (Vienna, 2004).
- Wassiliou-Seibt, A.-K., 'Die Familie Xiphilinos in 11. Jahrhundert: der Beitrag der Siegel', in B. Caseau (ed.), *Les Réseaux familiaux. Antiquité tardive et Moyen Âge: In Memoriam A. Laiou et É. Patlagean* (Paris, 2012), 307–23.
- Wassiliou-Seibt, A.-K., 'Die Neffen des Patriarchen Michael I. Kerullarios (1043–1058) und ihre Siegel. Ikonographie als Ausdrucksmittel der Verwandtschaft', *Bulgaria Mediaevalis* 2 (2012a), 107–19.
- Weiss, G., 'Forschungen zu den noch nicht edierten Schriften des Michael Psellos', *Byzantina* 4 (1972), 11–52.
- Weiss, G., *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (MBM 16) (Munich, 1973).
- Westerink, L.G., 'Some Unpublished Letters of Blemmydes', *BSI* 12 (1951), 43–55.
- Wolska-Conus, W., 'Les écoles de Psellos et Xiphilin sous Constantin IX Monomaque', *TM* 6 (1976), 222–43.
- Wolska-Conus, W., 'L'École de droit et l'enseignement du droit à Byzance au XI^e siècle: Xiphilin et Psellos', *TM* 7 (1979), 1–106.
- Zaitsev, A.I. and J. Ljubarskij, 'Dva pis'ma Mikhaila Psella', *BSI* 42 (1981), 24–8.
- Zervos, C., *Un philosophe néoplatonicien du XI^e siècle: Michel Psellos* (Paris, 1919).

Index

This index covers Part 2 of the book: the summaries and excursuses. However, if material on a lemma from Part 2 is thin, and there is fuller information or discussion in Part 1, the extra details are indexed here; but this does not mean that Part 1 has been fully indexed. Any references from Part 1 are shown as italicised page-numbers at the start of relevant entries. Other references give letter and excursus numbers: letters are distinct works of literature, while excursuses are disconnected and self-sufficient dating arguments. Neither should be indexed as if part of a continuous text. Letter numbers follow one- or two-letter abbreviations (“KD”, “S” etc.) used throughout the book; excursuses are marked as such.

This index references persons, dignities, offices, places, objects, institutions and concepts, but only in their eleventh-century dimension. No lemmata are included from the wide range of earlier cultural material (mainly Ancient Greek, Latin and Judaeo-Christian) which Psellos references in his letters. However, earlier writers are listed if, for example, adduced as models for eleventh-century writers.

Nearly all persons in these lemmata have entries on the website of the Prosopography of the Byzantine World (PBW), but references are only given here if PBW gives extra information not derived from Psellos’ letters. A permalink number ends each PBW reference cited. To use it type <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/>, then the number (with no space).

Letter references in brackets mark false or doubtful cases. Names in brackets are not found in the letters, but are supplied from other historical sources. The symbol “(?family)” marks possible family names which cannot be confirmed as such.

- Abydos (on the Dardanelles) S 95, S 165
Aegean or Aegean Sea (theme), *see krites*
Agros (monastery and/or small estate) 53–4,
KD 12, S 198
Aikaterine (empress, wife of Isaakios I) [PBW
Aikaterine 101: 106226] KD 156,
S 112
Aimilianos (patriarch of Antioch) [PBW
Aimilianos 61: 106228] M 2–4;
see also excursus 7 for other possible
references
aktouarios (financial official), *see* Georgios
aktouarios
Alan hostage (mistress of Constantine IX)
[PBW Anonyma 210:
158267] KD 34
Alea (episcopal see, probably in Optimaton),
see bishop of Alea
Aleppo KD 43
aloe-wood (gift) M 9
Alopos (family), *see* Alopos *proedros* and
logothetes of the dromos; Theodoros
Alopos
Alopos *proedros* and *logothetes of the*
dromos S 87
Amaseia (Armeniakon), *see* metropolitan of
Amaseia
Amorion (Anatolikon), *see* metropolitan of
Amorion
Anastasios Lizix [PBW Anastasios 2101:
157462] KD 128, KD 202, P 1, S 10,
S 25, S 78, excursus 2; for his widow,
see K 2
Anatolikon (theme), *see krites*
Andronikos Doukas (first son of Ioannes
Doukas kaiser) [PBW Andronikos
61: 106267] KD 232, KD 260, S 145
Ankyra KD 83
Antioch, *see* patriarch of Antioch; *see also* G 8,
(G 13), KD 43, KD 62, S 26,
S 154
archimandrite from Olympos KD 112, S 185
(probably the same man)
Aristeides (Ailios, second-century orator and
rhetorical model) G 24
Aristenos (family):
Aristenos *protoasekretis* (probably a single
career)
as student KD 224
as official concerned with tax KD 94
dignities and offices G 24, KD 111,
KD 148
Aristenos (friend of Psellos and father of
Aristenos *protoasekretis*) KD 224

- Aristenos (family): (*cont.*)
 Aristenoi (two relatives in exile) KD 67;
see also 26, 32, excursus 5
- Aristotle (philosopher, rhetorical model and teacher) C 1, KD 100, KD 160, KD 224, S 12, S 174, S 187–8, S 205
- Armeniakon (theme), *see krites*
- Artigenes (monastery) S 30, S 178
- Athens S 20, S 33, S 95, S 186
- Atzikome (village in Opsikion) KD 39, KD 99
- babies KD 68, S 72, S 117, S 157
- Basilaion (metropolitan *see once under* Ankyra), *see metropolitan of* Basilaion
- Basileios (Maleses), (*krites of Armeniakon*) [PBW Basileios 2105: 158064, maybe also PBW Anonymus 2394: 157831], *see (perhaps)* “young *krites of Armeniakon*”; *see also* KD 76, KD 96, KD 132, excursus 3
- Basileios, metropolitan of Nikomedia [PBW Basileios 180: 108581] KD 104
- Basileios, *mystolektes* and *krites of* Cappadocia S 110
- Basileios Splenarios *vestarches, krites of* Armeniakon KD 132
- Basileios *vestarches* and *epi tou kanikleiou* KD 103, KD 146, S 88 (probably all the same person)
- Basilica (legal compilation) KD 209
- basilikos, see basilikos of Madytos; see also* KD 73
- basilikos of Madytos* KD 1, KD 64, S 148, S 165
- baths KD 23, KD 32, KD 116, KD 203, KD 212, KD 56, S 157
- Besaina (episcopal *see in* Thessaly), *see bishop of* Besaina
- birds (gifts) G 6, K 1, KD 32
- bishop, *see* KD 12, KD 17, KD 47, KD 241, S 15, S 96, S 140; *see also the following sees:*
 Alea S 76
 Besaina S 103
 Gordiason KD 146–9, S 131 (the same man)
 Korone S 134
 Matiane KD 146–7, S 131 (the same man)
 Noumerika S 18
 Paionia KD 130
 Panion S 50
 Parnasos KD 75, S 62–3 (the same man)
 Sozopolis S 41
- blinding S 82
- Boleron (theme), *see krites*
- books C 1, G 25, KD 20, KD 32, KD 190, KD 261, S 37, S 115, S 162
- Boukellarion (theme), *see krites*
- Bourtzes (family):
 Ioannes Bourtzes S 105
 Ioannes’ brother S 105
- bread (gift) KD 260, KD 271–2, S 52–3, S 68, S 132, S 137
- Bulgaria KD 240
- butter (gift) G 5–6, G 9, KD 75, KD 233, S 62
- Byridoi (small port in Thrace) KD 9
- Cappadocia (theme), *see krites*
- Chalcedon, *see metropolitan of* Chalcedon
- Chaldaean philosophy C 1, S 9, S 206
- charistike* 46–7, KD 38, KD 108, KD 126, KD 251, S 135, S 178
- Charsianon (theme), *see krites*
- Chasanes [PBW Anonymus 2174: 157612] (student of Psellos) S 39, S 172, S 189, excursus 5
- cheese (gift) G 5–6, G 9, KD 206, KD 233, KD 264, S 59
- Choirobakchoi (estate on Sea of Marmora) S 71
- Choirosphaktes (family); *see* Eustratios
 Choirosphaktes; Michael
 Choirosphaktes; Michael
 Choirosphaktes’ son
- Christophoros (relative of Psellos working in Hellas) S 141
- Chrysobalantites (family: anonymous favourite of Psellos) S 64
- chrysobull KD 250, S 148, S 165
- coins (gift) KD 170, M 9
- Constantine IX Monomachos (emperor) [PBW Konstantinos 9: 107527] S 114, S 155, excursus 14
- Constantine X Doukas (emperor) [PBW Konstantinos 10: 107528] excursuses 1, 6, 14, 16 and 17
- Constantine III Leichoudes (*proedros* and *protovestiarious*, then patriarch) [PBW Konstantinos 13: 107529] S 28, S 73, and probably S 177
- Constantine, nephew of Michael Keroularios [PBW Konstantinos 120: 107553], recipient of many letters 59–88; excursus 10
- Constantine Doukas (second son of Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*) [PBW Konstantinos 61: 107530] KD 232, KD 260
- Constantine Hierax S 123
- Constantine (Konstas) Psello, *see* Michael Psellos (before tonsure)
- Constantine Xiphilinos, *droungarios of the vigla* S 205

- Constantinople:
 Acheiropoietos (monastery) 53, KD 124, KD 250–1
 Anargyroi (church) KD 12
 Chalke (palace gate and vestibule) S 139
 Chalkoprateia (church and school) S 168
 Hagia Sophia (church and *oikonomeion*) KD 104
 Hodegon (monastery) KD 204
 Ta Diakonisses (school) S 162
 Ta Narsou (monastery and school) 55, KD 126–7, S 135 and probably S 65
 Corinth, *see* metropolitan of Corinth
 crops and their pests G 11, KD 102
 Cyprus KD 80, KD 159
- Dalassenos (family): anonymous benefactor of Anastasios Lizix KD 264, S 78; *see also* S 136
- Danube KD 29, KD 207
 dating the letters, *see* excurses 1–17
 Demosthenes (ancient rhetorician and model) G 24, KD 27, KD 222, M 17
 Diogenes (family), *see* Romanos IV Diogenes; Romanos IV Diogenes' infant son
dioiketes (tax official) KD 83, S 33, S 100
 Dobrosou or Dobrosontos (monastery) 54, G 20, KD 89
 Doche (estate in Opsikion) KD 117
 Dokeianos (family), *see* (Theodoros) Dokeianos
- Doukas (family), *see* Andronikos Doukas (son of Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*); Constantine X; Constantine Doukas (son of Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*); Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*; Michael VII
- doux* (military officeholder):
doux of Antioch (probably Nikephoritizes) KD 43, KD 62, S 154
doux of Dyrrachion KD 133
 Drougoubiteia (theme), *see krites droungaria*, *see* Pothos' mother
droungarios, *see* Constantine, nephew of Keroularios; Pothos' father
droungarios of the vigla, *see* Machetarios; Constantine Xiphilinos
- Dyrrachion, *see doux* of Dyrrachion
- Edessa G 8
 Egyptian philosophy C 1
 (Eirene Pegonitissa) wife of Ioannes Doukas *kaisar* [PBW Eirene 20017: 159494] G 9
- Elias *protonotarios* K 1
 Elias (monk, perhaps Elias Krystoulas, according to one ms of KD 212) excursus 4
- emperor, *see* Constantine IX; Constantine X; Isaakios I; Michael VII; Romanos IV
- empresses (in their own right – for a time, at least), *see* Eudokia; Theodora; Zoe
- empresses (wives of emperors), *see* Aikaterine; Eudokia; Zoe
- Ephesos, *see* metropolitan of Ephesos
- Epiphanius Philaretos [PBW Epiphanius 2101: 158080] S 169
- epi ton deeseon* (official dealing with petitions to the emperor), *see* Nikolaos Cheilas; Leon(tios) nephew of the metropolitan of Patra; *see also* KD 149, S 176
- epi ton kriseon* (senior judicial office, created by Constantine IX), *see* Constantine, nephew of Keroularios; *see also* KD 85
- epi ton oikeiakon* (functionary of the imperial household) S 23, S 163 (probably the same person)
- epi tou kanikleiou* (imperial private secretary), *see* Basileios *vestarches* and *epi tou kanikleiou*
- Esaias *proximos* KD 24
 Esaias (sheltered by Constantine Leichoudes) S 177
- Euchaita (Armeniakon) *see* metropolitan of Euchaita
- Eudokia (Makrembolitissa, empress) (c. 1030–c. 1085) [PBW Eudokia 1: 107051], *see* KD 5–6, KD 31, KD 214, M 20, S 3, S 104, S 156, S 184; *see also* excursus 1
- Euphemia (Psellos' adoptive daughter) KD 191, KD 214, KD 233, M 5, S 177
- Euphemia's husband the *vestarches* (and children) KD 214, KD 268, S 157, excursus 3
- Euphrates KD 29, KD 207, M 15
- Eustratios Choirosphaktes *magistros* and *protonotarios of the dromos* [PBW Eustratios 101: 107080] G 25, KD 147, S 124, S 176
- exile KD 6, KD 48, KD 63, KD 67, KD 74, KD 85, S 61, S 123, S 126, S 173
- fish (gift) KD 75, KD 87, KD 245, KD 263, KD 274, M 9, S 46, S 48, S 56–9, S 104, S 159–60
- flowers (gift) S 132
- fruit (gift) K 1, KD 170, KD 234, KD 237–9, KD 260, KD 271–2, S 27, S 52–3, S 68, S 132, S 137

- Ganos (mountain, monasteries) S 149–50
genikos (high administrative office), *see*
 Nikephoros, nephew of Michael
 Keroularios
- Georgios *aktouarios* K 95
- Georgios (ex-fellow-student of
 Psellos) KD 25–6
- gifts sent with letters (or letters sent with gifts,
 or letters sent in response to gifts),
see aloe-wood; birds; bread; cheese;
 coins; fish; flowers; fruit; a horse;
 nuts; ointment; snake; truffles; wine;
see also excursus 1
- Gordiason (episcopal see in Cappadocia), *see*
 bishop of Gordiason
- Gospels as superior to philosophical
 writings C 1, KD 267
- grammatikos* (scholar, teacher or
 secretary) KD 35, KD 111, KD 137
- Gregorios *magistros* (landowner in
 Boukellarion) KD 84
- Haplokonnesos (military jurisdiction near
 Madytos) KD 64, S 165
- hegoumenos* (head of Orthodox monastery):
hegoumenos of Ta Narsou KD 126–7,
 S 65;
hegoumenos of Smilaka (?) KD 113; *see also*
 KD 53, KD 71, KD 164, KD 205,
 M 8, S 166
- Hellas (theme) *see krites*
- Herakleia (probably Ereğli in Thrace) KD 9
- Hermogenes (second-century writer on
 rhetoric) G 20, KD 20, KD 224
- Hierax (family) *see* Constantine Hierax
- Hikanatos (family): Hikanatissa S 138
- hippodrome (mainly metaphors) KD 57, KD
 93, KD 135, S 100, S 136, S 142
- Hodegon (monastery in
 Constantinople) KD 204
- Homonoia (monastery in theme of Aegean
 Sea) KD 60
- Horaia Pege (monastery where Psellos lived
 on Olympos) KD 177, KD 228,
 M 7
- horse (gift) KD 232
- humorous letters (a subjective selection) KD
 38, KD 155, KD 232, M 18, S 117,
 S 178, S 184, excursus 4
- hunting KD 68, KD 186, KD 232, KD 242,
 S 6, S 71, S 112, S 113, S 156, S 191
- hypertimos* (a dignity in these letters exclusive
 to Psellos) KD 147, KD 261, KD
 268, S 167, excursus 9
- hypatos of the philosophers* M 7, S 155,
 excursus 9
- Iasites (family): Iasites *kouropalates* G 25, KD
 6, S 171, Sn 1
- imperial court:
 advice for aspiring courtiers S 167, S 169
 business and ceremonial G 5, KD 41, KD
 43, KD 67, KD 158, S 73, S 155
 Psellos in disfavour at court G 1, KD 143,
 KD 198
 Psellos rejects court M 5, S 37
 Psellos returning to court S 114–15
 women at court KD 34, S 1
- India KD 61, KD 200, S 124, S 152
- Ioannes Bourtzes, *vestarches* S 105
- Ioannes (Chiot monk) [PBW Ioannes 438:
 158357] KD 36
- Ioannes Doukas *kaisar* [PBW Ioannes 62:
 107265] for letters (more than 30)
 addressed to Ioannes, *see* excursuses
 1 and 6
- Ioannes *logothetes* (who replaced dismissed
 Constantine Leichoudes) [PBW
 Ioannes 115: 107286] KD 158,
 S 190
- Ioannes Mauropous (metropolitan of
 Euchaita) [PBW Ioannes 289:
 109594] 89–127, KD 33–4, KD
 45–7, KD 54, KD 105, KD 190, KD
 221, S 40, S 80, S 173, S 182–3, Sp 1
 Ioannes' brother KD 33
 Ioannes' nephew KD 34
- Ioannes (monk on Olympos) S 27
- Ioannes *ostiaris, protonotarios of the*
dromos S 125
- Ioannes VIII Xiphilinos (monk and patriarch)
 [PBW Ioannes 18: 107262] C 1,
 (G 37), KD 191, KD 228, KD 265,
 KD 273, M 5, M 7, M 20, S 3, S 37,
 S 44, S 139
 Ioannes' brother M 7
 Ioannes' nephew KD 265, M 7
- Isaakios I Komnenos (emperor) [PBW
 Isaakios 1: 107447] KD 156, KD
 215, M 20, S 6, S 69–70, S 81, S 113,
 S 120, S 155, S 161, S 170, S 191
- Isocrates (model stylist) S 102
- Joseph, pupil of Psellos known in Antioch
 M 2–4, S 170, S 181, excursus 5
- judicial career advice excursus 16.5
- judicial information excursus 16.2
- kaisar, see* Ioannes Doukas *kaisar*
- Kaisareia (in Cappadocia) S 176, Sn 1
- kaisarissa, see* (Eirene Pegonitissa)
- Kallinikos (monk) KD 205
- Kalokyros (?family): exiled petitioner KD 48

- (Katakalon) Kekaumenos KD 30, KD 59, KD 141
- Kathara (monastery) KD 194, KD 200, S 77
- Katotika (combined theme of Hellas and Peloponnesos) see *krites*, *praitor*
- Kazeia episkepsis (fiscal unit of the imperial domain) M 8
- Kekaumenos (family), see (Katakalon) Kekaumenos
- Kellia (Megala) (monastery on Olympos) KD 108, KD 200, KD 273, S 77
- Kenchres (family), see Symeon Kenchres
- Keroularios (family), see Michael I Keroularios
- Kibyrraioton (theme), see *krites*
- Koloneia (theme and metropolitan see), see metropolitan of Koloneia
- Komnenos (family), see Isaakios I Komnenos
- Kontostephanos (family): Kontostephanos *magistros*, nephew of Isaakios I S 170
- Korone (episcopal see in Peloponnesos), see bishop of Korone
- kourator* (administrator of an imperial domain), *kourator* of Cyprus KD 80, KD 159 (probably not the same man); see also KD 150, S 151
- kouropalates* (high-ranking civil dignity), see *iasites kouropalates*; (Katakalon) Kekaumenos; see also anonymous deceased official KD 268
- Kouzenas (birthplace of Constantine Leichoudes) S 68
- krites* (judicial administrator of a theme) *passim*; see excursuses 16–17 and the following entries on individual themes:
- Aegean or Aegean Sea, see Nikolaos Skleros; see also KD 60, KD 123, KD 125, KD 137, S 79, S 95
- Anatolikon KD 82, S 41 (no reason to treat them as one person)
- Armeniakon, see Basileios Malese;
- Basileios Splenarios; perhaps Michael Psellos; see also KD 54, KD 57–8, KD 96, KD 136, S 35, S 80
- Boleron KD 89
- Boukellarion, see Michael Psellos; Morocharzanes; see also KD 83–4, KD 92 (no reason to treat them as one person)
- Cappadocia, see Basileios, *mystolektes* and *krites* of Cappadocia; see also S 158 (probably a different person)
- Charsianon S 73, S 121 (probably not the same person)
- Drougoubiteia KD 90–1 (maybe the same person)
- Hellas KD 8, KD 154, S 26, S 33–4, S 103, S 141; see also Katotika
- Katotika KD 55, KD 69–70, KD 74, KD 76, KD 86, KD 93, KD 154, S 26, S 33–4, S 147, S 153; and maybe S 20, S 134, S 141
- Kibyrraioton, see Michael *krites* of Kibyrraioton; see also KD 47, KD 50, S 107
- Macedonia, see Chasanes; Pothos; see also KD 7, KD 73, KD 172, S 50, S 129; and probably KD 172;
- Opsikion, see Pothos; Zomas; Zomas' successor; see also KD 97–100, KD 107–8, KD 116–20, KD 124–5, KD 141–4, KD 155, KD 187, KD 243, KD 251, (KD 273), (S 18), S 43
- Optimaton KD 51–2; KD 106; S 55; S 75–6
- Paphlagonia KD 109–10, S 49 (probably all the same ex-student of Psellos)
- Peloponnesos KD 154
- Thrace KD 77–8, S 149 (no reason to treat them as one person)
- Thrace and Macedonia, see Pothos; see also KD 64
- Thrace, see Sergios (Hexamilites); see also KD 61, KD 66, KD 130–1, KD 150–3, KD 248, KD 254, KD 270, S 47, S 51, probably S 180
- Krysto(u)las (family), see Elias (monk)
- Kyzikos, see metropolitan of Kyzikos
- language G 19, KD 45, KD 91, KD 135–6, KD 264, S 9–11, S 27, S 86, S 88
- Larissa (metropolitan see in Thessaly), see metropolitan of Larissa
- Leichoudes (family), see Constantine III Leichoudes
- (Leon Diogenes), see Romanos IV Diogenes' infant son
- Leon Melandros KD 122
- Leon Paraspondylos (elsewhere Strabospondylos) *protosynkellos* [PBW Leon 62: 113226] 128–40, excursus 12
- Leon(tios) nephew of the metropolitan of Patra S 10, S 89
- libellisios* (bureaucratic office with disputed duties) S 176
- Lizix (family), see Anastasios Lizix; see also his widow K 2
- lobbying (of emperors) excursus 14

- logothetes* (head of an imperial bureau, or of the whole civil service), see *Ioannes logothetes*
- logothetes of the dromos* (office with ceremonial duties, especially over foreign affairs), see *Alopos proedros* and *logothetes of the dromos*; Nikephoritzes
- Lykandos (theme) KD 172
- Lysias (ancient orator recommended as a model) M 17
- Lysokraneia (village in Optimaton) S 76
- Macedonia (theme) see *krites*
- Machetarios (family), *droungarios of the vigla* S 108
- Madytos (port on the Dardanelles, seat of a metropolitan and a *basilikos*) see *basilikos* of Madytos, metropolitan of Madytos
- magistros* (dignity ranking between *vestarches* and *proedros*), see Constantine, nephew of Keroularios; Eustratios Choiroshaktes; Gregorios *magistros*; Ioannes Xiphilinos; Kontostephanos, Pothos; Psephas; *strategos* of Abydos; see also G 25, KD 20–2, KD 70, S 97, S 124, S 136, S 146
- maistor* (senior teacher):
of Chalkoprataia S 168
of ta Diakonisses S 162
of the rhetors, see metropolitan of Thessalonike
- Maleses (family), see Basileios Maleses; see also KD 58, KD 76, KD 132
- Mamytze (village in Opsikion) KD 251
- Matiane (episcopal see in Cappadocia), see bishop of Matiane
- measurement of land KD 42, KD 84, KD 221
- Medikion (monastery on southern shore of Sea of Marmora) 53–5, KD 13, KD 125, KD 140, KD 200, KD 202, S 29, S 77
- megas doux* (admiral) S 170
- megas droungarios* see Constantine, nephew of Michael Keroularios
- megas oikonomos* (major financial official in the patriarchate) KD 121–2, S 31
- Melandros (family), see Leon Melandros
- Melias (monastery in Opsikion) KD 81
- Mesopotamia (theme) S 180
- metropolitan see KD 225, KD 259, M 19, S 126, and perhaps KD 230; see also the following entries on individual metropolitan sees:
- Amaseia KD 58, KD 136, (KD 137), S 35, excursus 3
- Amorion KD 82
- Basilaion, see Synetos, metropolitan of Basilaion; see also an earlier host of Psellos KD 32
- Chalcedon KD 129
- Corinth S 64
- Ephesos S 179
- Euchaita see Ioannes Mauropous; KD 47 probably refers to another metropolitan
- Koloneia KD 30
- Kyzikos see Romanos metropolitan of Kyzikos; see also (KD 12)
- Larissa KD 69
- Madytos KD 1, S 148
- Neokaisareia KD 57
- Nikomedia KD 49, KD 104
- Patra S 10, S 89, S 111
- Thessalonike G 18–20 (all the same person)
- Michael VII Doukas emperor [PBW Michael 7: 107817] KD 188, (KD 189), (KD 207), S 104, S 143–4
- Michael I Keroularios patriarch [PBW Michael 11: 107819] excursus 11; see also use of his name to identify Constantine and Nikephoros, his nephews
- Michael Choiroshaktes KD 243
- Michael Choiroshaktes' son KD 243 (probably not Eustratios Choiroshaktes)
- Michael (monk, ex-vestes) S 99
- Michael *krites* of Kibyrraioton S 66–7
- Michael *patrikios* KD 20–2
- Michael Psellos (1018–1078) [PBW Michael 61: 107822]:
attitudes to servants G 13, KD 212, KD 214, S 44, S 157, Sn 1
dignities and offices see excursus 9
hints that he governed provinces as *krites* Armeniakon KD 136
Boukellarion KD 65
Thrakesion S 180
fellow-students see Georgios, Romanos; see also KD 11
friends, *passim*, see especially excursus 16; friends of his father S 19–20, S 200
relatives 36–8
adoptive family, see Euphemia; Euphemia's husband the *vestarches* (and children); perhaps see also S 146

- biological family KD 18, KD 214 see
 Christophoros, *krites* of
 Charsianon; Michael *krites* of
 Kibyrraioton; see also KD 90, KD
 107, KD 144, KD 150–1, KD 160,
 KD 165, KD 169, KD 178, KD 225,
 KD 253, KD 262, S 17, S 45–6, S 66,
 S 106, S 146, S 163, S 193–4
- monasteries owned (or coveted) 53–6
- sickness KD 13–15, KD 177, KD 200, KD
 228, S 49, S 73, S 115, S 197
- students 24–39, excursus 5
- military office-holders, see *doux*; *strategos*;
tourmarches
- Mitza Kathara (estate) KD 63
- monasticism 42–58
- monk, see Elias; Ioannes Xiphilinos; Ioannes
 and Niketas (Chios); Kallinikos;
 Kekaumenos; Leon Paraspondylos;
 Michael (ex-vestes); Michael
 Psellos; Nikolaos, monk of Hodegon
 monastery; Pherebios; Symeon
 Kenchres; and the following list:
- monk and archimandrite from
 Olympos, see archimandrite from
 Olympos
- monk (ex-slave) KD 164
- monk (from Antioch) G 23
- monk (from Hagios Anastasios) KD 23
- monk (from Olympos) S 166
- Monomachos (family), see Constantine IX
monoprosopon (tax) KD 53, KD 81–2, S 96,
 S 116
- Morocharzanes (family, monastery), see
krites of Boukellarion; see also
 KD 65
- Moschos (*notarios* of Indian origin) KD 61
- Mountania (monastery) 52, S 178
- music:
 and spiritual harmony S 91
 at weddings S 1, S 83–4
 metaphor for personal charm KD 86, S 176
 metaphor for writing G7, G 10, S 189
 musicians KD 180, KD 212, S 12, S 154
 reception KD 231
- mystolektes* (officer communicating secret
 imperial decisions), see Basileios,
mystolektes and *krites* of
 Cappadocia
- mystikos* (imperial secretary) S 114
- Nea Mone (Chios) KD 36
- Neokaisareia (metropolitan see in Pontos), see
 metropolitan of Neokaisareia
- network (of non-military administrators), see
 excursus 16–17
- Nicaea KD 117, KD 120, S 18, S 102
- Nikephoritzes (nickname of Nikephoros
sebastophoros, *paitor* of
 Peloponnesos and Hellas) [PBW
 Nikephoros 63: 107950] KD 8,
 S 103 and perhaps S 134; probably
 also *doux* of Antioch
- Nikephoros, nephew of Michael Keroularios
 [PBW Nikephoros 111:
 107962] 59–88; KD 31, M 17–18,
 S 117, S 174
- Niketas (Chiot monk) [PBW Niketas 166:
 158418] KD 36
- Nikolaos Cheilas [PBW Nikolaos 2101:
 158205] S 12
- Nikolaos Skleros (*krites* of Aegean Sea) [PBW
 Nikolaos 2104: 158208] 18–21,
 excursus 2
- Nikolaos (monk of Hodegon monastery) KD
 204
- Nikomedia (metropolitan see in Optimaton)
 see metropolitan of Nikomedia
- notarioi* (imperial) S 70, S 191
- notarios* (thematic official, subordinate to
krites) excursus 16.1
- Noumerika (episcopal see, probably in
 Opsikion) see bishop of Noumerika
- nuns KD 201, S 31, S 130
- nuts (gift) G 26, KD 235–6
- oikodomion* (tax) KD 73
- ointment (gift) M 9
- Olympos KD 108, KD 112, KD 191, KD 267,
 M 5, M 9, S 27, S 29, S 44, S 77,
 S 101, S 125, S 166, S 177, S 185,
 excursus 13
- Opsikion (theme), see *krites*
- Optimaton (theme), see *krites*
- ostiarios* (office originally for eunuchs), see
 Ioannes *ostiarios*
- Paionia (episcopal see), see bishop of Paionia
- Panion (episcopal see in eastern Thrace), see
 bishop of Panion
- Paphlagonia (theme), see *krites*; see also KD
 206, KD 233
- Paraspondylos (?family), see Leon
 Paraspondylos
- Parnasos (episcopal see in Cappadocia), see
 bishop of Parnasos
- Patra (metropolitan see in Peloponnesos), see
 metropolitan of Patra
- patriarch of Antioch, see excursus 7
- patriarch of Constantinople, see Constantine
 III Leichoudes; Ioannes VIII
 Xiphilinos; Michael I Keroularios

- patrikia zoste* (highest office for females) KD 60
- Patrikios (?family): sympathetic landlord S 138
- patrikios* (dignity low in status by the 11th century), see Leontios; Michael *patrikios*; Nikolaos Cheilas; see also S 138
- Peloponnesos (theme), see *krites*; *praitor*; see also Katotika
- Pentaktenos (family): newly-tonsured monk KD 114–15
- Pherebios (monk) S 167
- Philaretos (family), see Epiphanius Philaretos
- philia* (affection, friendship) *passim*; see especially KD 61, KD 84, S 65, S 95, S 146, excursus 16.4; see 147 on difficulties in translating the word
- philosophical chair (Psellos' distinction; some references oblique) C 1, G 21, KD 225, M 12, M 16, S 16
- philosophical influences (on Psellos), see Aristotle; Chaldaean philosophy; Egyptian philosophy; Plato; Porphyrios; Proklos; Socrates
- philosophy *passim*, especially C 1, G 12, M 7, S 1, S 8, S 16–17, S 84, S 124, S 174
- philosophy vs. rhetoric (in Psellos' career) G 18, G 20, M 4, S 16, S 42, S 110, S 187–9
- Piraeus S 135
- Plato (philosopher and model stylist):
 biography S 153
 philosophy C 1, KD 35, KD 160, KD 190–1, KD 239, S 12, S 116, S 142, S 174, S 187–8, S 206
 rhetorical model G 24, KD 224, S 184
- Porphyrios (3rd century neoplatonist philosopher) S 86, S 187
- Pothos, son of the *droungarios* (*droungaria*) [PBW Pothos 102: 109102] 30–1, excursus 5
 Pothos' father KD 35, KD 38–9, KD 41–2
 Pothos' mother KD 53, KD 220, KD 250
- praitor* (senior thematic judicial official), see details on the following themes:
 Opsikion KD 99
 Peloponnesos and Hellas (Katotika) see Nikephoritizes
 Thrakesion KD 248, S 47, S 51
- proedros* (high-ranking civil dignity), see Alopas, *logothetes of the dromos*; Constantine Leichoudes; Constantine, nephew of Keroularios; Michael Psellos; Nikolaos Skleros
- proedros of the philosophers* (probably the first name of Psellos' philosophy chair) KD 198, M 7, S 155, excursus 9
- Proklos (5th century neoplatonist philosopher) KD 102
- protoasekretis* (high chancery official), see Aristenos *protoasekretis*; Epiphanius Philaretos; see also KD 201, S 176
- protokentarchos* (high naval official) KD 78
- protonotarios* (chief notarios) excursus 16; see also K 1
- protonotarios of the dromos*, see Eustratios Choirsophaktes; Ioannes ostiarios; krites of Kibyrraioton; Sagmatas, *protonotarios of the dromos*
- protoproedros* (high dignity, ranking above proedros), see Constantine, nephew of Keroularios; Michael Psellos
- protosynkellos* (high ecclesiastical distinction, independent of the normal hierarchy), see Leon Paraspondylos
- protovestiarios* (high official in the imperial household), see Constantine Leichoudes
- proximos* (deputy principal of a school), see Esaiaas
- Psellos (family), see Michael Psellos
- Psephas *magistros* (?family) S 198–9
- Pylai (port on the Sea of Marmora) S 97
- Pythia (small estate in Opsikion) KD 243
- Python (monastery bought by Ioannes Mauropous for a relative) KD 221
- Raidestos (Thrace) KD 9
- raiktor* (high-ranking courtier sometimes a cleric or army commander), see Sagmatas
- rhetoric, *passim*, especially G 18–20; see also philosophy vs. rhetoric
- rhetoric (masters and models), see Aristeides; Aristotle; Demosthenes; Hermogenes; Isocrates; Lysias; Plato
- Rhodes KD 50
- Robert Guiscard [PBW Robert 61: 108209] S 143–4
- Rodinos (?) (place in Macedonia) S 189
- Romanos IV Diogenes (emperor) [PBW Romanos 4: 108215] G 25, KD 5, KD 146, KD 148, KD 189, KD 261
- Romanos IV Diogenes' infant son (Leon Diogenes) S 3
- Romanos metropolitan of Kyzikos [PBW Romanos 108: 108632] S 30, S 79, S 178

- Romanos (ex-fellow-student of Psellos) KD 16
- Romanos Skleros [PBW Romanos 104: 108221] KD 68
- Romanos (son of Constantine, nephew of Keroularios) S 157
- Sagmatas, *protonotarios of the dromos* KD 242, KD 274
- Sakelline (female monastery) KD 201
- sakellarios* (administrative office in religious sphere) KD 211
- schedographia KD 16, S 115
- schools 13–41 KD 11–12, KD 16, KD 24–6, S 162, S 168, S 198–9 (?)
- scientific observations C1, G 11, G 26, KD 197, KD 203, KD 235–6, KD 239, S 85–6
- sebastos* (highest dignity in the pre-Kommenian period) KD 214
- sekretion* (bureaucratic department) KD 78, KD 84, M 8, S 45
- Sergios (Hexamilites) (*krites* of Thrakesion) [PBW Sergios 105: 109110] G 27, K 2
- sickness (of Psellos) KD 13–15, KD 177, KD 200, KD 228, S 49, S 73, S 115, S 197
- Skleros (family), see Nikolaos Skleros; Romanos Skleros
- Smilakai (monastery) KD 113
- snakes:
 (poisonous) K 2
 (edible gift) S 164
- Socrates (philosophical model) KD 134, M 12, S 16, S 184
- Sozopolis (episcopal see in Anatolikon), see bishop of Sozopolis
- spiritual father KD 226, KD 267, M 13–15
- spiritual son KD 189, KD 226
- Splenarios (family), see Basileios Splenarios *vestarches*
- starvation (in monasteries) KD 89, S 130
- strategos* of Abydos S 165; see also *magistros* military office-holders
- Strobilos (estate of Acheiropoietos in Opsikion) KD 251
- Stylianos (friend of Psellos) KD 11
- summaries (discussion of method) 143–4
- Syke (on Sea of Marmara) KD 97
- Symeon Kenchres (monk) S 54
- Synetos metropolitan of Basilaion KD 32
- synkellos*, see metropolitan of Amaseia; Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos; Sagmatas, *protonotarios of the dromos* (?); Ioannes Mauropous tax *passim*, especially land taxes; see also in particular *monoprosopon*; *oikodomion*
- tax collectors excursus 16.3
- taxeotes* (tax official) KD 106
- tax officials, see *dioketes*; *taxeotes*
- Thaumatourgos (monastery near Antioch) KD 138
- Theodora (empress) [PBW Theodora 1: 108357] KD 34, M 16, M 20, S 198–9
- Theodoros Alopous KD 50
- (Theodoros) Dokeianos [PBW Theodoros 101: 108365] S 113, S 120, S 170
- Theoktistos (unidentified donor of a monastery to Psellos) KD 89
- Theophanes (friend of Psellos, father of a disobedient pupil) KD 24
- Thessalonike, see metropolitan of Thessalonike
- Thrace (theme), see *krites*
- Thrace and Macedonia (combined themes), see *krites*
- Thrakesion (theme) see *krites*
- Thrakesios KD 248, KD 254
- Thyrides (village, probably in Opsikion) KD 39
- tonsure G 4, G 8, KD 30, KD 170, S 54, S 190
- tourmarches* (military officer), see *tourmarches* of Haplokonnesos; see also military office-holders
- tourmarches* of Haplokonnesos KD 64, S 165
- Trapeza (monastery) KD 38, KD 53
- Trigleia (on southern shore of the Sea of Marmora) KD 97
- truffles (gift) KD 40, KD 233
- vestarches* (dignity ranking above *vestes*), see Anastasios Lizix; Aristenos *protoasekretis*; Basileios Splenarios; Basileios *vestarches* and *epi tou kanikleiou*; Chasanes; Ioannes Bourtzes; *krites* of Drougoubiteia; Euphemia's husband (Psellos' son-in-law); see also KD 55, KD 81, S 100
- vestes* (dignity losing importance in the 11th c.), see Michael Psellos; see also S 98–9
- violence KD 171, KD 243, KD 246
- war and peace:
 campaigns of *doux* of Antioch (probably Nikephoritzes) KD 43, KD 62
 campaigns of Isaakios I KD 156, S 6, S 69–70, S 81, S 161
 campaigns of Romanos IV KD 5, KD 146, S 3, S 176, Sn 1

- war and peace: (*cont.*)
 pacifist pleas KD 156
 see also KD 189, S 87
- water and water-mill disputes KD 140, KD 251
- wedding KD 13, S 1, S 83, S 84
- wine (gift) KD 238, KD 240, KD 260, KD 271–2, S 52–3, S 68, S 132, S 137
- women G 7, KD 60, KD 169, KD 201, S 31, S 72, S 83, S 116, S 130, S 157;
 see also empresses, nuns
- Xerochoraphites (family): favourite of Psellos S 79
- Xeros (family), see Xeros, praitor of Thrakesion; see also KD 254
- Xeros, praitor of Thrakesion S 47, S 51
- Xiphilinos (family), see Constantine Xiphilinos; Ioannes Xiphilinos
- “young *krites* of Armeniakon” (?) 33–8, 109, KD 54, KD 57–8, S 35, S 80, excursus 3
- Zoe (empress) [PBW Zoe 1: 108519] M 20, S 115
- Zomas (Zomes) (?family): Zomas (*krites* of Opsikion) [PBW Anonymus 2164: 157602] excursus 8
- Zomas’ successor (*krites* of Opsikion) KD 81, KD 200, S 77